

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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FRONT COVER: Great Gray Owl at Big Marsh, Butler County, 19 February 1996. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore.

INSIDE BACK COVER: Editorial Staff, Subscription/Membership Information, Instructions to Authors, Officers, Board of Directors, Standing Committees.

BACK COVER: Meeting Dates, Report Deadlines, Birdline, Materials Available.

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# SPRING BIRD COUNT--1995

PETER C. PETERSEN

The 1995 spring count was held on 13 May. A total of 14 counties participated, the same total as the previous year (Petersen 1995) and double 1993 (Petersen 1994). Four new counties, Cedar, Clay, Dickinson, and Story were added while no count was submitted for Jasper, Lee, Marion, or Monona counties.

Eleven counties reported more than 100 species with Louisa again leading with 153, just ahead of Clinton with 150 (Table 1). Geographically only two corner counties reported, down from three in 1994. Again the strongest coverage was from east-central Iowa with six counties represented while central Iowa had only one, north-central one, and northwestern Iowa four. The species total was 230, up from 222 last year. Some areas had rain as is often the nature of spring. Eighty-two people participated, up from 70 last year, and 61 in 1993 with some people making observations in more than one county as is usually the case. Scott County had the best participation with 15 observers. In addition to the hours and miles reported in Table 1, Scott County had 2 hours and 1.5 miles of coverage by boat.

**Table 1.** Count statistics for 1995 spring bird count.

County	Species	Obs.	Parties	Foot	Hours			Foot	Miles		
					Car	Feeder	Owling		Car	Owling	
Allamakee	128	7	4	11	15	0	0.5	8	254	10	
Cedar	79	2	1	7	1.5	0	0	5	15	0	
Cerro Gordo	148	9	6	23.5	11	7	0.5	8.5	178	5	
Clay	114	3	1	3	5	0	0	3.5	93	0	
Clinton	150	6	4	7.5	27	0	7.5	7.5	420	60	
Dickinson	99	2	1	9	0	1	0	0	75	0	
Fremont	146	9	3	9	14	0	0	16	290	0	
Johnson	107	6	3	6	6	2	0	10	100	0	
Louisa	153	3	2	11	10	0	1	8	172	5	
Muscatine	113	3	2	5.5	5	0	2	5	131	9	
Plymouth	76	2	1	7.5	0	0	0	6	0	0	
Scott	146	15	8	10	15	3	3	15	370	15	
Story	104	5	3	5	9	0	0	7	37	0	
Woodbury	121	10	2	16	10	0	1	10	145	1	
totals	230	82	41	132	128.5	13	15.5	110.5	2280	105	

Thirty-three species were reported from all 14 counties (Table 2) and an additional 19 species were missed by only one county. On the other hand, 31 species were found in only one county. Louisa, with eight and Fremont with six, had most of these near misses. Species missed which are a surprise included Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and Summer Tanager. Shorebirds were down to 24 species from an excellent 29 in 1994. Other rare-for-the-season species that were reported included White-winged Scoter from Woodbury County and Long-eared Owl from Muscatine County. More than 1,000 individuals were found for eight species, the most was 6,829 Red-winged Blackbirds. Every participating county except Plymouth had a high count for at least one species. Some of the interesting high counts included 1,660 Black Terns and 34 Le Conte's Sparrows, both in Fremont County. A Lawrence's Warbler in Cedar County raised an interesting question of how

Table 2a. Spring Bird Count Data, 1995.

COUNTY	Fl	Am		Do	Gr			Bl		Ye		Tr		Mu	
	Bl Gr	Ea Gr	Wh Fe	Cr Co	Am Br	Le Bl	Bl He	Gr Eg	Ca Eg	Gr He	Cr NH	Cr NH	Sw	Sw	
Allamakee	1			10			24	7		1					
Cedar							3								
Cerro Gordo	31	1	75	68			5	3	1	1					
Clay	3		64	26			1								
Clinton	26		4	67		1	23	3		1					
Dickinson	4		100				2	1		1			13		
Fremont	62	2	217	37	1		18		12	3					
Johnson				1			3								
Louisa	5			2			17	8	13	2	1	1			
Muscatine	1			3			35			1					
Plymouth				40							1				
Scott	4			5			40	3		2				2	
Story					1		1		3						
Woodbury			29	45			8			1					
No. Individuals	137	3	489	305	2	1	180	25	29	13	2	1	13	2	
No. of Counties	9	2	6	11	2	1	13	6	4	9	2	1	1	1	
COUNTY	Sn Go	Ca Go	Wo Du	Wi Te	Gr Du	Am Ma	No Fl	Wi Te	No Sh	Am Ga		Fe Du		Ne Du	
Allamakee		20	28	2		13		7	2						
Cedar			4												
Cerro Gordo		159	69			97	2	60	28		6			6	
Clay	1	200	13			17		26	1			1	2		
Clinton		53	48			41		44	10						
Dickinson		100	25			50		100	25					10	
Fremont	6	2	36	5		14		124	57	8				13	
Johnson		3	6			16									
Louisa		60	43		2	28		50	15						
Muscatine		50	39			15		2							
Plymouth						3		2	2						
Scott		87	17			144		4	4				1		
Story		15	12	1		18		30	1						
Woodbury	1	52	79	3		44		41	10	8			1	1	
No. Individuals	8	801	419	11	2	500	2	490	155	16	6	1	4	30	
No. of Counties	3	12	13	4	1	13	1	12	11	2	1	1	3	4	
COUNTY	Le Sc	Wi Sc	Wh Bu	Ho Me	Co Me	Fe Br	Ru Du	Tu Vu	Os	Ba Ea	No Ha	Sh Ha	Co Ha	Fe Ha	
Allamakee				5				31	1	5		1			
Cedar								1						1	
Cerro Gordo	32						52	8	2					1	
Clay	15		2				21	16							
Clinton	42						8	27			1	2	1		
Dickinson	2						10								
Fremont	3						1	76		2					
Johnson								15						1	
Louisa	2			8		6	12	16			1		1	1	
Muscatine				4		6		8						1	
Plymouth								2							
Scott	1						5	11				1	1		
Story								5							
Woodbury	20	1			2		24	9							
No. Individuals	117	1	2	17	2	12	133	225	3	7	2	4	7	1	
No. of Counties	8	1	1	3	1	2	8	13	2	2	2	3	7	1	

Table 2b. Spring Bird Count Data, 1995.

	Br	Sw	Ta	Le	Am	Pe	Gr	Ne	Wi	No	Vi	Co	Am	
COUNTY	Ha	Ha	Ha	Ha	Ke	Fa	Pa	Ph	Tu	Bo	Pa	So	Mo	Co
Allamakee			6					2	4			3	1	1
Cedar	2		2					4						
Cerro Gordo	1		11		4		2	18				4		103
Clay			5					11		1		5		27
Clinton			6		5			12	8		3	15	1	30
Dickinson								1				2		50
Fremont		2	21	1	8	1		19	5	13	2	25		597
Johnson			2		5			2						2
Louisa			20		7			44	12	2		2	1	120
Muscaline	1		8		4			7	2	2		4		
Plymouth			2		1			7	6					
Scott			8		8			15	3			1		34
Story			2		19		3	18				15		2
Woodbury			3		3			13	27			13		71
No. Individuals	4	2	96	1	64	1	5	173	67	18	5	89	3	1,037
No. of Counties	3	1	13	1	10	1	2	14	8	4	2	11	3	11
	Am													
COUNTY	Sa	Go	Se	Fl		Gr	Le	So		Sp	Up	Hu	Se	We
	Cr	Pl	Pl	Pl	Ki	Ye	Ye	Se	Wi	Se	Sa	Go	Sa	Sa
Allamakee	1				17			1		1				
Cedar														
Cerro Gordo			12		18	7	8	5		9	1		18	2
Clay					9					1				
Clinton	4				12	1	2	1		11			5	
Dickinson					1						1			
Fremont					137			6		8		8	4	
Johnson					6									
Louisa					19		7	2		16				
Muscaline					15		4							
Plymouth					3					1				
Scott		5			43	6	8	1		12				1
Story		14			9	9	3		1				1	
Woodbury				1	21					5				
No. Individuals	5	19	12	1	310	23	39	9	1	64	2	8	28	3
No. of Counties	2	2	1	1	13	4	8	4	1	9	2	1	4	2
	Wh													
	Sh													
	Lo													
COUNTY	Le	Ru	Ba	Pe		Si	Bi	Bi	Co	Am	Wi	Fr	Bo	Bi
	Sa	Sa	Sa	Sa	Du	Sa	Do	Do	Sn	Wo	Ph	Gu	Gu	Gu
Allamakee										2				
Cedar														
Cerro Gordo	6	2		3	2	7	6	7	2		7	151		354
Clay														21
Clinton	6		6							2			1	108
Dickinson	4													
Fremont		1		37	5	8								1
Johnson														
Louisa	8			1										
Muscaline				4						1				25
Plymouth														
Scott	6	2		4				1		5				110
Story	1			5					3		8			
Woodbury												23		2
No. Individuals	31	5	6	54	7	15	6	8	5	10	15	174	1	621
No. of Counties	6	3	1	6	2	2	1	2	2	4	2	2	1	7

Table 2c. Spring Bird Count Data, 1995.

COUNTY	He Gu	Ca Te	Fo Te	Bi Te	Po Do	Mo Do	Bi Cu	Ea Ow	Gr Ow	Ba Ow	Lo Ow	Co Ni	Ch Wi	Wh Po
Allamakee				4	26	17				1				
Cedar					25	25						1		1
Cerro Gordo		2	41	230	58	53		3	2	1		1		
Clay		1	9	41	15	16			1	1		1		
Clinton	2			42	144	48			2	6		18		2
Dickinson			2	12	50	50								
Fremont				1,660	27	136		4	2	1		1		4
Johnson				50	13	14				1		3		
Louisa				140	31	108	1		1	5		41	1	1
Muscatine		1			32	44				1	1	17		1
Plymouth						24								3
Scott		6	5	12	127	194	2	1	3	6		35		
Story					58	8						2		
Woodbury			2	170	330	55		3	1	4				16
No. Individuals	2	10	59	2,361	936	792	3	11	12	27	1	120	1	28
No. of Counties	1	4	5	10	13	14	2	4	7	10	1	10	1	7

COUNTY	Ch Sw	Fu Hu	Be Ki	Pe Wo	Pe Wo	Ye Sa	Do Wo	Ha Wo	No Fl	Fl Wo	Cl Fl	Ea Pw	Ye Be	Ac Fl
Allamakee	11	4	3	3	14	10	6	2	7	1		1		
Cedar	2			7	2		3	1	4			1		
Cerro Gordo	34	5	3	9	6		20	6	31					
Clay	8	1	3	5	2	1	1	1	9					
Clinton	56	1	2	25	8	1	5	2	7	2		3		
Dickinson	1		1	2	1		2	1	1		2	2		
Fremont	185	2	4	62	25		28	1	39		1	5		3
Johnson	26	1	2	16	7		20	3	5		2	1		
Louisa	65	3	4	48	6		15	4	16	1		3	1	
Muscatine	70	1	1	16	3		2		5	1		1		
Plymouth				1			2	1	3			1		
Scott	209	4	6	24	13		17	2	17	2	1			
Story	28	1	3	2	3		5	2	2					
Woodbury	25			19	4		12		26		1	1		1
No. Individuals	730	23	32	239	94	12	138	26	172	7	7	19	1	4
No. of Counties	13	10	11	14	13	3	14	12	14	5	5	10	1	2

COUNTY	Al Fl	Wi Fl	Le Fl	Em Sp	Ea Fp	Cr Fl	We Ki	Ea Ki	Ho La	Pu Ma	Tr Sw	Po Sw	Bk Sw	Cl Sw
Allamakee			1		13	6		10	8	17	205	81	1	14
Cedar			1		2	5			1			4		
Cerro Gordo		2	6	4	1	2		6	7	2	164	25	4	10
Clay		2	1	5	2	1		7		1	32	5	2	38
Clinton			5		10	8		9	17	1	60	102	26	31
Dickinson			2			2		1		4	50	50	50	50
Fremont		3	8	2	4	17		118		38	336	29	50	291
Johnson	1		6	11	1	3		2		1	150	100	10	56
Louisa		1	6		4	17		40	20	12	165	76	75	202
Muscatine					6	5		6	4	2	55	40	34	25
Plymouth	2		6		1			2		2	2	24		
Scott			6		6	4		11	13	126	153	61	5	6
Story			1		1				14	10	31	2		
Woodbury		3	6		1	12	2	30	2	2	5	230	170	30
No. Individuals	3	11	55	22	52	82	2	242	86	218	1,408	829	427	753
No. of Counties	2	5	13	4	13	12	1	12	9	13	13	14	11	11

Table 2d. Spring Bird Count Data, 1995.

COUNTY	Bn	Bl	Am	Ca	Tu	Wh	Br	Ca	Ho	Se	Ma	Ru	Bl	Ea
	Sw	Ja	Cr	Ch	Ti	Nu	Cr	Wr	Wr	Wr	Wr	Ki	Gn	
Allamakee	86	33	47	27	1	1	1		26	2		1	25	3
Cedar	30	50	30	15	10	2			20				3	5
Cerro Gordo	62	85	168	34		11			26	2		17	4	4
Clay	75	17	7	11		2			45		3	9	1	2
Clinton	137	34	82	45	12	3			34	1		3	14	17
Dickinson	50	50	50	10		2			2		2	5	1	1
Fremont	351	151	80	78	42	14		1	241	1	23	17	15	24
Johnson	45	25	76	31	10	11			22			6		1
Louisa	107	58	40	14	11	10	2	2	43	4	5	15	6	12
Muscatine	53	30	35	6	1	2			31			1	2	9
Plymouth	18	12	7	7		5			15					6
Scott	154	68	166	56	17	13		2	69			1	6	9
Story	20	15	24	6	1	7			12		3		3	2
Woodbury	64	63	68	47		16			59		3	3	2	1
No. Individuals	1,252	691	880	387	105	99	3	5	645	10	39	78	82	96
No. of Counties	14	14	14	14	9	14	2	3	14	5	6	11	12	14
COUNTY	Gr													
	Ve	Th	Th	Th	Th	Po	Ca	Mo	Th	Wa	Sh	St	Vi	Vi
Allamakee	1	5	3		13	93	24		11	76		61		2
Cedar	1		21		1	30	10		4	20		100		1
Cerro Gordo	3	2	60	1	2	400	28		15	36		382		1
Clay	1	4	16			64	12		15			30		5
Clinton	1	2	7		5	178	24	2	11	40	1	332		1
Dickinson	1	5	5			100	2		4			100		2
Fremont			10		6	442	78		67	243	7	219	3	4
Johnson	1	15	20		1	60	28		12			113		4
Louisa		6	4		3	190	73	1	53	20	6	208		6
Muscatine	13	1	3		2	105	24	1	14	10		235	1	
Plymouth	1		2	1	1	20	11		15				1	2
Scott	5	1	21	1	7	293	50	1	22	12		351		1
Story			4		1	42	15		11	2	1	80		
Woodbury			8			106	116		36			12		1
No. Individuals	28	41	184	3	42	2,123	495	5	290	459	15	2,224	5	30
No. of Counties	10	9	14	3	11	14	14	4	14	9	4	14	3	12
COUNTY	Ye													
	Th	Wa	Ph	Ey	Wi	Wi	Te	Cr	Na	No	Ye	Ch	Ma	Ma
Allamakee	13	6		1	6	3	31	1	6	1	33	3	3	1
Cedar	3						3		3	2	3	5	7	
Cerro Gordo	1	3		1	2	2	16	3	25	2	22	5	18	
Clay		2			1		10	6	15	1	17	5	7	
Clinton	11	9	1	5	4	7	26	1	12	1	21	6	7	10
Dickinson		1				1	25	10	15		25	1	1	1
Fremont	12	72		1			175	14	27		136	1		
Johnson	3	2	2	4	2	8	23	3	25	4	14	12	6	1
Louisa	12	10		2	1	6	106	10	36	4	52	13	6	6
Muscatine	4	20		2	2	2	12	2	5		4	2		
Plymouth	2			1				4			3			
Scott	4	17		1	3	1	32	2	21	4	16	11	10	5
Story				1		2	3		5		2	1	2	
Woodbury		18				1	5	9	15		76		8	
No. Individuals	65	160	3	19	21	33	467	65	210	19	424	65	75	24
No. of Counties	11	11	2	10	8	10	13	12	13	8	14	12	11	6

Table 2a. Spring Bird Count Data, 1995.

COUNTY	Ye	BT	Ye			Ba	Bl			Wo	Wo			No
	Ru	Gr	Bl	Th	Pa	Br	BP	Ce	Wh	Am	Pr	Ea	Ov	Wa
	Wa	Wa	Wa	Wa	Wa	Wa	Wa	Wa	Wa	Fe	Wa	Wa		
Allamakee	31	2			5	2	3	5	6	98	5		23	6
Cedar	25	3	1	1		1			8	20	1		4	12
Cerro Gordo	64	2	7		21		8		14	29			9	5
Clay	39		1		12		7		13	9			4	3
Clinton	28	12	5	2	16		10	2	5	50	1		3	7
Dickinson	25	2	2		1	1	1	1	2	2			1	1
Fremont	123				3		12		1	10			1	3
Johnson	40	4	8		10	6	3		4	30			4	2
Louisa	202	13	10		75	2	8	2	2	42	3	1	8	6
Muscatine	11				3		1		1	2	1		2	6
Plymouth	39		2		3		1		4	5			8	1
Scott	61	12	2		15	1	4	2	8	51	3		6	6
Story	7	1	4				1		8	11			2	1
Woodbury	327						28		19	7				10
No. Individuals	1,022	51	42	3	164	13	87	12	95	366	14	1	75	69
No. of Counties	14	9	10	2	11	6	13	4	14	14	6	1	13	14
COUNTY														
	Lo	Ke	Co	Mo	Co	Ho	Wi	Ca	Br	Sc	No	Br	Bl	In
	Wa	Wa	Wa	Wa	Ye	Wa	Wa	Wa	Ch	Ta	Ca	Gr	Gr	Bu
Allamakee	2	1			17	1	1			4	24	35		4
Cedar	6			1	9					9	20	10		4
Cerro Gordo	1				20		5			3	30	36		4
Clay				1	10		3			2	1	15		2
Clinton	1	1	1		28		2	1		8	89	46		21
Dickinson					1		1				1	2		
Fremont	2	1			248		1		2		104	72	2	13
Johnson	1				8		2	3		5	41	26		14
Louisa		2			22	1	2			2	86	42		39
Muscatine					4					12	28	28		24
Plymouth					1		1				4	17	1	
Scott		1			41		1		2	4	155	37	1	26
Story	1		1		10		2	1			8	11		1
Woodbury	1	10		1	71		1			1	14	66		4
No. Individuals	15	16	2	3	490	2	22	5	4	50	605	443	4	156
No. of Counties	8	6	2	3	14	2	12	3	2	10	14	16	3	12
COUNTY														
	Di	Ea	Ch	Co	Fi	Ve	La	Sa	Gr	Le	Fe	So	Li	Sw
Allamakee		14	38		10	2		9				94		2
Cedar	5	2			8	1			3			6		1
Cerro Gordo	1		47	3	5	3		4	1	1		42		9
Clay		1	17	2	6	1						6	5	5
Clinton	10	10	42		17	2	2	5	2			32		
Dickinson			4		1				1			25		
Fremont	137	20	128	5	52			1	3	34		97	1	1
Johnson	1	4	18		3							1	2	
Louisa	81	15	61		41	3	12	12	10		1	51	3	5
Muscatine	26	7	11		11		1	3	6			14		
Plymouth		9	3		15		4		3			2		1
Scott	13	13	46	1	14	2		2				88	1	1
Story	1	1	26		2							12		
Woodbury		9	24	6	22	1	5	2	1			7	5	
No. Individuals	275	105	465	17	207	15	24	38	30	35	1	477	17	25
No. of Counties	9	12	13	5	8	8	5	8	9	2	1	14	6	8



Table 2f. Spring Bird Count Data, 1995.

COUNTY	Wh Th Sp	Wh Cr Sp	Ha Sp	Da Ey Ju	Bo	Fl Wi Bl	Ea Me	We Me	Ye He Bl	Gr Ta Gr	Co Gr	Br He Co	Or Or	Mu Sw
Allamakee	13				16	407	21	2	10		79	73	3	
Cedar	3	1				100		1				20		
Cerro Gordo	21				20	1,415	2	10	36		391	46		
Clay	14	5	27		8	350		9	42		100	33		
Clinton	24	2			6	853	48	4	65		287	56	1	
Dickinson		4	2		1	200		1	50		100	50		
Fremont	3	13	41		5	1,776	24	22	115	1	157	86	36	
Johnson	20	20			2	113	15				87	2		
Louisa	8	25			6	414	35	15	1		183	152	2	
Muscatine	3		1		2	176	17	10			90	66		
Plymouth			7			35	1	5			12	26	3	
Scott	18	33			5	643	47	9			360	59		2
Story	16	4	2	1	12	252	4	27	13		85	44		
Woodbury	17	1	37			100	1	3	42		89	58	12	
No. Individuals	160	108	117	1	83	6,834	215	118	374	1	2,020	771	57	2
No. of Counties	12	10	7	1	11	14	11	13	9	1	13	14	6	1

COUNTY	Ba Or	Pu Fi	Ho Fi	Fl Si	Am Go	Ho Sp	Eu Tre Sp
Allamakee	35		29		71	107	
Cedar	1				20	5	
Cerro Gordo	30		46		45	253	
Clay	11		4		8	45	
Clinton	20	7	13		51	205	
Dickinson	2		25		25	100	
Fremont	68		21		164	96	
Johnson	27		13		115	39	
Louisa	69		21		105	155	2
Muscatine	33		15		40	280	
Plymouth	4					7	
Scott	38	2	65		121	371	
Story	2		17		48	227	
Woodbury	34		9	2	54	14	
No. Individuals	374	9	278	2	867	1,904	2
No. of Counties	14	2	12	1	13	14	1

it should be listed. The most notable deletion was a Ferruginous Hawk reported in Fremont County. No documentation was provided for this easily misidentified species. The Trumpeter Swans reported in Dickinson County were all part of an introduced flock.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Petersen, P. C. 1994. 1993 Spring Bird Count. *Iowa Bird Life* 64:28-32  
Petersen, P. C. 1995. 1994 Spring Bird Count. *Iowa Bird Life* 65:5-9

235 McClellan Blvd., Davenport, IA 52803

# CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1995-96

W. ROSS SILCOCK

This year the number of counts held continued to decline with only 39, the fewest for several years (Figure 1). As compiler of one missing count, Tristate, I suspect that scheduling is getting tougher as most people seem to have less time to spend on CBCs, especially more than one or two per year. A notable exception is Pete Petersen, who this year not only continued as compiler of his usual five, but added yet another, Buffalo! There were no other new counts, but back after absences were Fort Dodge and Van Buren County. Not reporting this year were Monona County, De Soto N.W.R., Tristate, Cedar Rapids, Walnut Creek N.W.R., Ottumwa, and Lamoni.

This year's high count of 88 species was at Keokuk (Table 1), which had an excellent waterfowl list (Table 2). Davenport was a close second at 86, followed by Rathbun at 75, and Muscatine at 72. Oakville had the most birds with 97,621, including more than 92,000 American Crows. Missouri River counts, which usually lead in this category, had few Snow Geese and Mallards this year.

In the discussion of Regular Species below, noteworthy population changes included declines in Gray Partridge, Northern Bobwhite, and Harris' Sparrow, the increase in Bald Eagle, the steep decline in Snow Goose, mini-invasions of Red-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Shrike, and Common Redpoll, a slow decline in Northern Cardinal which, along with the marked decline in House Sparrow, may be related to the House Finch increase, and the amazing increase in Eurasian Tree Sparrow. The only addition to the all-time CBC species list, now at 201, was Trumpeter Swan, which now is countable if from an established population.

Fewer observers took part this year than last, 553 compared with 629 (down 12%), and found fewer birds, 404,766 versus 494,868 (down 18%). The average count had 14 observers in six parties and found 53 species, all down from last year.

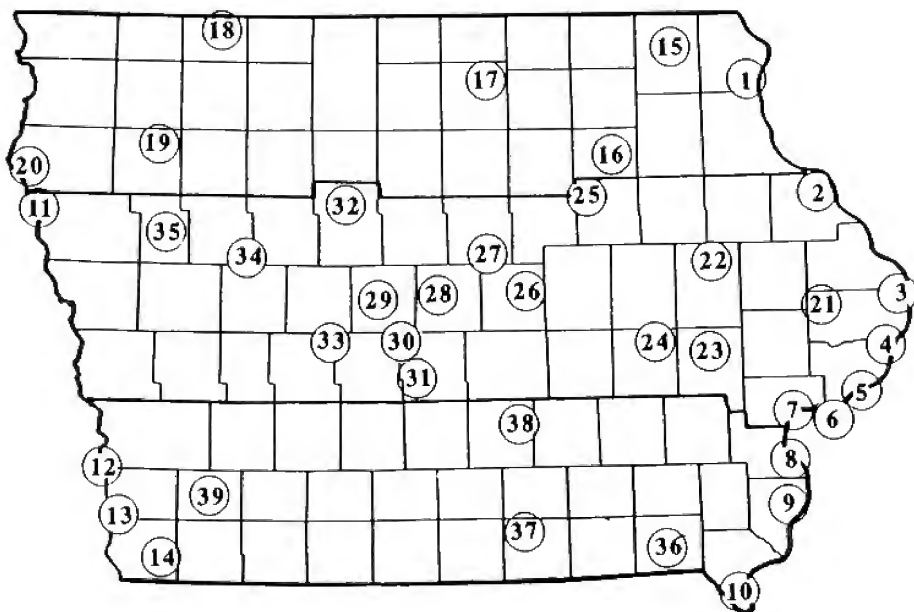
## REGULAR SPECIES

While Double-crested Cormorant was at its lowest total in seven years, Great Blue Herons continued in good numbers, with more than 100 in each of the last three years.

The only swans were six now-countable Trumpeters; no Mute or Tundra swans were found. The ubiquitous Canada Goose continues to maintain numbers with some 30,000 noted, but Snow Geese were virtually absent; the 415 reported was easily a 10-year low. The total for the last three years is lower than the average yearly count for the last 10 years. Wood Ducks are appearing in increasing numbers each year; this year a 10-year high of 59 versus the 10-year average of 22. Other dabbling ducks were in average numbers, although Mallards were at a 10-year low of 27,774, compared to the previous low of 35,000+ in 1992-93 and the 10-year average of 78,875. While most diving ducks, including Common Merganser, were down somewhat, Common Goldeneye was at a 10-year high. Oldsquaw continues to be reported on a regular basis, with from one to six found each of the last 10 years.

Bald Eagles continue their increase, with a 10-year high of 1,763, while other raptors were about average, except for American Kestrel. The last two years have seen the two highest counts of American Kestrel in the last 10 with 786 and 731; the 10-year average is 587.

After a fairly good year last year with 126, Gray Partridge dropped to 63, about half the 10-year average of 146. Gray Partridge has not reached its 10-year average since 1989-90, and peaked at 586 in 1987-88. Also apparently struggling is Northern Bobwhite, the 193 almost a 10-year low. Its 10-year average is 353, and the peak was 526 in 1988-89. Wild Turkey reached another 10-year high, however. Only four American Coots and ten Killdeer were recorded, down from recent years, but Common Snipe were found in average numbers.



*Figure 1. Locations of Iowa Christmas Bird Counts, 1995-96.*

Possibly the most interesting phenomenon in recent Iowa CBC years has been the increase in the number of gull species reported, with an incredible nine species reported in the past two years. This year "only" eight species were found, but this is the third best year so far. Ring-billed Gulls were about as low as they have been during the last six years, but Herring Gulls had the highest total since 1987-88. Other gull species which have appeared in six or more of the last 10 years are Thayer's and Glaucous, and those seen in three or more of the last six years are Franklin's, Bonaparte's, Lesser Black-backed, and Black-legged Kittiwake.

Doves and owls were found in about average numbers, although the high counts of 27 and 29 Short-eared Owls the last two years are interesting after counts in the 6 to 15 range the prior three years. In addition, a total of 11 Northern Saw-whet Owls was reported, high for that species. Woodpeckers also were reported in average numbers, with no notable population trends among the resident species. However, few Northern Flickers, a somewhat mobile species, were reported. This is close to a 10-year low for that species.

Perhaps due to the relative lack of snow cover, only 467 Horned Larks were detected, a 10-year low; the high count was 6,421 in 1990-91. Snow Bunting numbers were down, but not much below their 10-year average, while Lapland Longspurs were above their average, and much better than the last three years.

Like the Northern Flicker, the Blue Jay is a mobile species which usually is resident. This year was a 10-year low for Blue Jays, although 3,804 were counted. Another corvid, American Crow, was at a 10-year high, due to a huge count of more than 90,000 at Oakville; numbers of this species each year depend on whether weather conditions allow large groups like this to remain as late as CBC time.

**Table 1.** Site Data for 1995-96 Christmas Bird Counts

Location	Date	Species	Total Birds	Field Obs	Pts	Miles Hr	Car	Ft	Owling Hr	Feeder Pt	Temp L	Snow Depth	Wind
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>													
1. YellowRivFor	27 Dec	49	3498	14	7	50	289	19	3	25	2	3	16 20 6 N 5-15
2. Dubuque	30 Dec	44	7604	19	7	51	194	29	0	0	1	4	18 34 1 S 0-10
3. Clinton	22 Dec	65	10197	10	4	37	405	10	3	27	2	4	20 26 0 W 2-10
4. Princeton	21 Dec	71	5861	9	4	37	354	9	6	48	2	4	16 29 0 NW 3-12
5. Davenport	17 Dec	86	20990	20	11	68	534	25	10	75	16	31	26 38 0 SE 8-15
6. Buffalo	27 Dec	61	4841	5	3	29	384	5	5	39	1	1	16 30 0 N 5-15
7. Muscatine	23 Dec	72	12730	10	4	36	331	10	5	54	10	20	21 28 0 NW 3-10
8. Oakville	20 Dec	64	97621	7	4	31	266	66	4	64	0	0	11 24 0 W 3-8
9. Burlington	16 Dec	62	6592	17	4	45	299	35	2	13	7	27	23 44 0 S 0-5
10. Keokuk	18 Dec	88	34430	9	5	44	401	10	0	0	4	12	30 37 0 SE-NE 10-20
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>													
11. Sioux City	23 Dec	55	9758	22	9	41	260	26	4	12	3	20	21 28 0 N 8-12
12. Omaha, NE	16 Dec	63	8883	31	9	51	415	26	2	41	2	4	28 47 1 S 4-8
13. Glenwood	30 Dec	52	3807	11	4	27	372	1	1	4	0	0	31 31 1 S-SW 5-10
14. Shenandoah	16 Dec	62	5263	17	5	42	200	14	1	2	3	14	24 47 1 S 5-16
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>													
15. Decorah	23 Dec	55	5263	13	5	34	271	10	1	6	4	4	19 24 6 N 5-15
16. Bremer Co.	16 Dec	46	2007	11	5	34	316	8	2	24	0	0	14 36 3 E 5-15
17. Mason City	16 Dec	40	5437	16	8	43	353	19	1	1	3	5	11 37 2 SW 14-14
18. Spirit Lake	30 Dec	43	9147	11	5	36	315	29	0	0	27	63	22 28 1 SE 2-3
19. Cherokee	16 Dec	43	3637	10	4	22	343	3	1	12	4	13	22 45 2 SSE 5-10
20. Westfield	2 Jan	27	706	3	2	16	140	7	0	0	1	3	22 30 2 NNE 5-15
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>													
21. Lost Nation	18 Dec	49	3664	11	5	39	410	6	1	16	2	4	31 38 0 NE 10-20
22. North Linn	27 Dec	56	4504	22	8	63	670	16	8	150	5	20	15 30 1 N 5-15
23. Iowa City	17 Dec	56	8496	25	8	59	527	19	5	35	8	34	27 35 1 NE 0-10
24. Amana	30 Dec	47	972	12	3	20	45	10	3	5	0	0	25 30 0 S 5-10
25. CedFills-Wat	17 Dec	61	8238	8	5	30	374	9	1	12	0	0	25 37 3 E 10-10
26. Marshalltown	16 Dec	40	2148	14	6	38	34	5	0	0	3	22	16 40 2 NE 5-10
27. Eldora-Union	20 Dec	39	2196	8	3	27	262	8	1	2	3	6	21 28 1 N 5-10
28. Ames	16 Dec	54	18316	34	17	104	423	72	4	25	12	24	20 38 2 - 0-0
29. Boone Co.	30 Dec	58	8591	36	18	105	528	57	4	23	0	0	29 33 2 S 0-10
30. Saylorsville	17 Dec	70	11023	30	13	99	574	65	2	18	0	0	29 38 2 SE 5-10
31. Des Moines	23 Dec	57	18905	16	7	45	373	18	3	8	7	18	13 25 0 NW 10-15
32. Fort Dodge	30 Dec	21	571	5	3	10	120	3	1	1	3	10	29 32 3 - 0-0
33. Jamaica	19 Dec	52	14676	7	5	46	545	15	2	19	1	2	28 30 2 NNW 15-25
34. Sac County	17 Dec	25	1864	7	3	25	193	9	0	0	3	8	29 32 0 SE 4-4
35. Ida County	16 Dec	38	2451	8	4	59	239	4	1	1	4	16	17 34 1 NNW 0-5
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>													
36. VanBuren Co	30 Dec	27	775	2	1	14	23	4	0	0	0	0	27 32 1 NW 5-10
37. Rathbun	16 Dec	75	17359	22	8	55	615	11	4	35	4	10	25 46 1 - 0-3
38. RedRockRes	16 Dec	71	16920	13	8	51	416	15	2	7	0	0	21 42 2 - 0-0
39. Montgom.Co	17 Dec	36	4825	8	3	20	233	4	2	36	1	3	22 38 6 NW-SE 5-5
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>404,766</b>										

Chickadees, nuthatches, and Brown Creeper were found in average numbers except for Red-breasted Nuthatch, which, at 380, was the second best count in the last 10 years, behind the high count of 697 in 1993-94; the 10-year average is 162.

The number of Carolina Wrens has declined slowly to 47 this year from peaks of 65 and 62 in 1992-93 and 1993-94, prior to which there was a gradual increase from only 12 in 1986-87.

Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, and American Robin were all found in low numbers. Although only 160 robins were counted statewide, that was not a 10-year low. Numbers have ranged from 70 to 2,514 in the last 10 years and averaged 1,036. Conditions other than a poor fruit crop possibly affected robin numbers, as Cedar Waxwings occurred in about average numbers.

Table 2a. Christmas Bird Count Data, 1995-96.

Location	Pl	Am	Do	Gr				Gr	Am			No	No		Am		Le
	Bl	Wh	Cr	Bl	Sn	Ca	Wo	Wi	Bl		Ma	Pl	Sh	Ga	Wi	Ca	Sc
	Gr	Pe	Co	He	Go	Go	Du	Te	Du								
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>																	
1. Yellow River Forest							3	1	8	466	2						
2. Dubuque							11		4	1,250							
3. Clinton				1		444		1	62	1,617	1	2	1				
4. Princeton				2		232	1		2	190					3		11
5. Davenport	1		1	5	67	533	1		16	2,738	4	1	5	1		8	30
6. Buffalo	1			1					2	260							
7. Muscatine				2		1,614		1	4	259						1	
8. Oakville				37		556			2	78		1					
9. Burlington				12		491		13		345				7			
10. Keokuk		1	3	5	3	751	6		21	2,437	7		11	3	3,403	163	
Subtotal	2	1	4	65	70	4,635	9	15	121	9,640	14	4	24	7	3,412	204	
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>																	
11. Sioux City				3		82				1,398	4	1	3				1
12. Omaha, NE			1	3	32	936		3		1,437	2						
13. Glenwood				4		18											
14. Shenandoah				8	269	775				1,673	7						
Subtotal	0	1	0	18	301	1,811	0	3	0	4,508	13	1	3	0	0	0	1
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>																	
15. Decorah						75				92							
16. Bremer County				1		16				61							
17. Mason City	1					857				1,232							
18. Spirit Lake					2	4,297				372			4				
19. Cherokee	1					396	3			211							2
20. Westfield						31											
Subtotal	2	0	0	1	2	5,672	3	0	0	1,968	0	0	4	0	0	0	2
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>																	
21. Lost Nation					2	330	1		1	24							
22. North Linn						110	4		1	63							
23. Iowa City				1		577			3	211	1						
24. Amana																	
25. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	1				1	845			6	2,167	1	2		2			2
26. Marshalltown						394											
27. Eldora-Union																	
28. Ames						110				35							
29. Boone County						1				1							
30. Saylorville				3		194	4		1	58	2	1					
31. Des Moines		1	1	4	2	3,400	1			654	1		27			1	
32. Fort Dodge						1											
33. Jamaica				2	36	8,000	2		3	3,200	2		29				
34. Sac County						120				75							
35. Ida County					1	603				80							1
Subtotal	1	1	1	10	42	14,685	12	0	15	6,568	7	3	56	2		1	3
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>																	
36. Van Buren County						200				300							
37. Rathbun			1		5	1,130			6	1,325	6						1
38. Red Rock Reservoir				2	2	1,900			13	3,500	5	1	7	1		1	1
39. Montgomery Co.																	
Subtotal	0	1	2	7	0	3,230	0	0	19	5,125	11	1	7	1		1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>																	
	5	4	7	101	415	30,033	24	18	155	27,809	45	9	94	10	3,414	212	
	Pl	Am	Do	Gr	Sn	Ca	Wo	Gr	Am	Ma	No	No	Ga	Am	Ca	Le	
	Bl	Wh	Cr	Bl	Go	Co	Du	Wi	Bl		Pl	Sh		Wi		Sc	
	Gr	Pe	Co	He				Te	Du								

Table 2b. Christmas Bird Count Data, 1995-96.

Location	Co Go	Ho Bu	Co Me	Co Me	Ba Ea	No Ha	Sh Ha	Co Ha	No Go	Ac Sp	Pe Ha	Pe Ta	Pe Le	Am Ke	Gr Pa
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>															
1. Yellow River Forest	2				77						1	55	6	5	
2. Dubuque					98		2	2				50	4	12	
3. Clinton	58		1	1	155						1	43	4	18	
4. Princeton	206	2		362	85	2	3	2				28	6	32	
5. Davenport	725	1		60	162	1	1	3	1			44	2	48	1
6. Buffalo	200			6	67	1	2					35	4	14	
7. Muscatine	12			36	100	2	2		1			45	8	29	23
8. Oakville	3				143	5	2	1				42	6	13	
9. Burlington	9		1	90	243		1	1				50	2	46	
10. Keokuk	4,528	18	13	380	259	2	4	1			1	30	3	24	
Subtotal	5,743	21	15	935	1,389	13	17	10	2	0	3	422	45	241	24
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>															
11. Sioux City	7				11	1	1			1		45	1	9	
12. Omaha, NE	172			161	14	1	3	2		1	3	62	2	36	
13. Glenwood	6			2	16		1	1				29		35	
14. Shenandoah					20	11	1				1	41	5	47	
Subtotal	185	0	0	163	61	13	6	3	0	2	4	177	8	127	0
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>															
15. Decorah					19			3				61	19	4	
16. Bremer County					15	2	1		1			14	8	18	8
17. Mason City					1		2	3	1			25	2		
18. Spirit Lake	1													1	
19. Cherokee					3		1					48	6	4	
20. Westfield					1							9	3	4	
Subtotal	1	0	0	0	39	2	4	6	2	0	0	157	38	31	8
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>															
21. Lost Nation					15	3	2					35	12	44	20
22. North Linn			1		11	2	1	1				55	5	22	
23. Iowa City					29	5	2			3		70	6	25	
24. Amana					8	1				2		14	2	5	
25. Cedar Falls-Waterloo					4		1	1			1	18	7	9	5
26. Marshalltown					6		1					24		9	
27. Eldora-Union					3		1				1	34	2	8	3
28. Ames						1	4	2				35	1	22	3
29. Boone County					5	1	4	2				36	6	14	
30. Saylorville				19	58	5	5	1				73	3	29	
31. Des Moines	6		1	4	33	2	4	1				39		15	
32. Fort Dodge					1							1			
33. Jamaica					3	2	2					25	4	13	
34. Sac County					1							25		11	
35. Ida County									1			11		8	
Subtotal	6	0	2	23	177	22	27	8	1	5	2	495	48	234	31
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>															
36. Van Buren County					3	1						5	1	6	
37. Rathbun	14	1	5	2,206	32	6	1	1	3		1	46	13	48	
38. Red Rock Reservoir	278			655	62		2	2	1			55	1	20	
39. Montgomery Co.						2	1					27	1	24	
Subtotal	292	1	5	2,861	97	9	4	3	4	0	1	133	16	98	0
<b>TOTAL</b>															
	6,227	22	22	3,982	1,763	59	58	30	9	7	10	1,384	155	731	63
	Co Go	Ho Bu	Co Me	Co Me	Ba Ea	No Ha	Sh Ha	Co Ha	No Go	Ac Sp	Pe Ha	Pe Ta	Pe Le	Am Ke	Gr Pa

Table 2c. Christmas Bird Count Data, 1995-96.

Location	R						R						Ea	
	Ne	Wi	No	Am	Co		Bi	He	Th	Gl	Fl	Mo	Sc	
	Ph	Tu	Bo	Co	Ki	Sn	Gu	Gu	Gu	Gu	Do	Do	Ow	
MISSISSIPPI RIVER														
1. Yellow River Forest	16	161		1		1					231	58	7	
2. Dubuque		54				2					802	53		
3. Clinton	26	41			1	3	58	451			293	169	7	
4. Princeton	8	30			1	1	69	95	1		119	238	9	
5. Davenport	18	1	12			4	1,656	1,524	2	1	1,531	547	5	
6. Buffalo	2	2	1				11	23			171	31	3	
7. Muscatine	3	2	61				147	139	1		286	257	8	
8. Oakville	28	13	4		1	4	51	72			48	66	7	
9. Burlington	18	4			3	3	1,214	37			344	146	3	
10. Keokuk		61	5		1	1	3,500	92		1	418	37	2	
Subtotal	119	369	83	1	7	19	6,706	2,433	4	2	4,243	1,602	51	
MISSOURI RIVER														
11. Sioux City	12	7	5	1							814	1	12	
12. Omaha, NE	15	54	5				9	1			190	3	5	
13. Glenwood	18		19								79	3	3	
14. Shenandoah	80	22	29								104	115	5	
Subtotal	125	83	58	1	0	0	9	1	0	0	1,187	122	25	
NORTHERN THIRD														
15. Decorah	42	180			3	1					489	30	5	
16. Bremer County	41	4									136	15	1	
17. Mason City	59										350	34	3	
18. Spirit Lake	19			1							14	1	1	
19. Cherokee	15										220		2	
20. Westfield	6										114			
Subtotal	182	184	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	1,323	80	12	
MIDDLE THIRD														
21. Lost Nation	52	146									152	4		
22. North Linn	146	24									233	16	2	
23. Iowa City	25	31					7	3			181	92	2	
24. Amana	3	34				1					35	6	4	
25. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	7	12									165	53	2	
26. Marshalltown	52	22									108	24		
27. Eldora-Union	43	16				1					89		1	
28. Ames	147		7				8				408	154	4	
29. Boone County	90	93	6			1					379	9	17	
30. Saylorville	155	8	11			1	13	9			237	158	8	
31. Des Moines	12			1			7	19		1	685	145		
32. Fort Dodge	3										26			
33. Jamaica	45	5				2					129			
34. Sac County	20										128			
35. Ida County	207	8									48	1	3	
Subtotal	1,007	399	24	1	0	6	35	31	0	1	3,003	662	43	
SOUTHERN THIRD														
36. Van Buren County											9			
37. Rathbun	28	105	25			2	3,200	4,800		1	131	66	3	
38. Red Rock Reservoir	20						2,700	450	2	1	88	8	3	
39. Montgomery Co.	44		3								113	3	1	
Subtotal	92	105	28	0	0	2	5,900	5,250	2	2	341	77	7	
TOTAL														
TOTAL	1,525	1,140	193	4	10	28	12,650	7,715	6	5	10,097	2,543	138	
	R Ne Ph	Wi Tu	No Bo	Am Co	Ki	Co Sn	R Bi Gu	He Gu	Th Gu	Gl Gu	Fl Do	Mo Do	Ea Sc Ow	

Table 2d. Christmas Bird Count Data, 1995-96.

Location	Gr Ho Ow	Ba Ow	Lo Ow	Sh Ow	No Ow	Be Ki	Pe He Wo	Pe Be Wo	Ye Be Sa	Do Wo	Ha Wo	No Fl Wo	Fl Wo	Ho La	Bl Ja
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>															
1. Yellow River Forest	7	3				3	1	38		46	9		9	8	78
2. Dubuque		3				12		70		92	21	4	3		71
3. Clinton	14	5	1		1	7	1	46	1	87	15	11	2	31	180
4. Princeton	8	1				3	4	30		73	28	8	3	6	128
5. Davenport	13	9				6	5	28	1	115	23	10	10	8	157
6. Buffalo	7	5	1			2	8	42		58	6	13	1	1	142
7. Muscatine	11	3	2			4	33	51	4	96	16	53	1	2	267
8. Oakville	25	1				2	6	42		57	6	19	1	17	115
9. Burlington		5				5	1	29		40	4	17	1		79
10. Keokuk	1	1				3	1	16		47	5	12		5	85
Subtotal	86	36	4	0	1	47	60	392	6	711	133	147	31	78	1,302
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>															
11. Sioux City	10	2				1		22		102	21	36			53
12. Omaha, NE	2	1				5	143	65		92	12	59			202
13. Glenwood	5		1			2	1	43	1	62	5	36		2	149
14. Shenandoah	18	4	4			3	1	20	2	39	7	12		34	94
Subtotal	35	7	5	0	0	11	145	150	3	295	45	143	0	36	498
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>															
15. Decorah	5	2				6	2	30		47	13	3	5	6	143
16. Bremer County	5	5				1	62	14		31	8	1	1	32	49
17. Mason City	6	2		1				12		44	8	4		4	69
18. Spirit Lake	5					1	12			73	34	4		177	50
19. Cherokee	6					3		8		33	9	21			71
20. Westfield	1							2		7	6	2		77	4
Subtotal	28	9	0	1	0	11	76	66	0	235	78	35	6	296	386
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>															
21. Lost Nation	11	2	1			1	2	25		49	17	3	1		98
22. North Linn	8	17		2		2	1	27	1	109	10	4	1	1	66
23. Iowa City	8	8	6	6	1	1		42		99	12	13			147
24. Amana	7	5	4	5	5			12		18	3	1	2	16	20
25. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	10	8	3	1		4	1	17	1	51	10	1	2	7	42
26. Marshalltown	3	1				1		14		31	8	7			48
27. Eldora-Union		4				1		11		31	8	2			50
28. Ames	11	2		1		14	1	64	1	176	43	10		7	180
29. Boone County	11	1	5	2	4	1		100	1	361	72	12		6	72
30. Saylorville	16	9	3	11		3		83		251	41	44		8	165
31. Des Moines	2					10		20		102	12	8			43
32. Fort Dodge		2								5		1			6
33. Jamaica	1					4	4	23		28	5	4			56
34. Sac County	2							7		23	4				26
35. Ida County	4									17	5	5		1	59
Subtotal	94	59	22	28	10	42	9	445	4	1,351	250	115	6	46	1,078
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>															
36. Van Buren County		1				1		1		17		2			26
37. Rathbun	15	3				2	3	39		52	6	18		10	259
38. Red Rock Reservoir	10	7				3	3	46		52	9	43		1	99
39. Montgomery Co.	5	2						7		12	2	2			156
Subtotal	30	13	0	0	0	6	6	93	0	133	17	65	0	11	540
<b>TOTAL</b>															
	273	124	31	29	11	117	296	1,146	13	2,725	523	505	43	467	3,804
	Gr Ho Ow	Ba Ow	Lo Ow	Sh Ow	No Ow	Be Ki	Pe He Wo	Pe Be Wo	Ye Be Sa	Do Wo	Ha Wo	No Fl Wo	Fl Wo	Ho La	Bl Ja



Table 2e. Christmas Bird Count Data, 1995-96.

Location	Am	Bl	Tu	Pe	Wh	Go					Am	No	Ce
	Cr	Ca	Ti	Br	Br	Cr	Ca	Wi	Cr	Ea	Am	No	Ce
	Cr	Ch	Ti	Nu	Nu	Cr	Wr	Wr	Ki	Bl	Fl	Mo	Wa
	Cr	Ch	Ti	Nu	Nu	Cr	Wr	Wr	Ki	Bl	Fl	Mo	Wa
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>													
1. Yellow River Forest	286	200	15	14	60	5					10		
2. Dubuque	469	285	82	24	118	7			1	4			70
3. Clinton	282	273	44	2	106	14	5	5	1		14		114
4. Princeton	208	155	51	5	72	13			3		5		10
5. Davenport	1,528	402	65	12	109	19	11	1	2		3		67
6. Buffalo	236	166	55		110	19	1		1	5	1	1	6
7. Muscatine	307	226	60	3	125	19	5	1	1	1	3	1	90
8. Oakville	92,068	144	30	4	53	3	1			6	5		148
9. Burlington	416	126	25	9	41	2	4	2	1		5		26
10. Keokuk	15,000	95	57	1	38	17	7		4	6	2	1	15
Subtotal	110,800	2,072	484	74	832	118	34	9	14	22	48	3	546
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>													
11. Sioux City	420	193		32	66	22			2		9		
12. Omaha, NE	552	315	38	12	93	6	1	1	1	11	1		25
13. Glenwood	155	119	8	1	32	6			2	7	21		2
14. Shenandoah	38	52	17	4	26	12		1	3		3		
Subtotal	1,165	679	63	49	217	46	1	2	8	18	34	0	27
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>													
15. Decorah	318	148	9	16	50	11				8	2		361
16. Bremer County	179	58		4	25	1							
17. Mason City	679	122			59	13					5		166
18. Spirit Lake	125	286		26	117	20					4		26
19. Cherokee	126	107		5	42	3				9	7		17
20. Westfield	10	38			5					7			
Subtotal	1,437	759	9	51	298	48	0	0	0	24	18	0	570
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>													
21. Lost Nation	229	100	26	4	45	9	2		6		1		70
22. North Linn	240	230	33	8	65	15				2			75
23. Iowa City	2,282	272	47	39	73	4	6	2			10		73
24. Amana	30	40	4	1	12	3						2	8
25. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	2,696	104		7	44	7			1		1		46
26. Marshalltown	170	56	7	1	46	3					20		10
27. Eldora-Union	111	70	2	8	39	2							32
28. Ames	9,500	548	25	82	175	24			6		12		87
29. Boone County	418	710	52	12	274	10							15
30. Saylorville	1,165	614	16	8	95	1	1	2	1		9		274
31. Des Moines	9,000	314	31	2	63	6	2			4	4		36
32. Fort Dodge	25	20			4								
33. Jamaica	118	77	5	2	22	1			1				268
34. Sac County	115	41			34	1							
35. Ida County	39	37		14	15	14							
Subtotal	26,138	3,233	248	188	1,006	100	11	4	15	6	57	2	994
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>													
36. Van Buren County	22	2	6		4	1	1		1				
37. Rathbun	480	164	34	4	51	1			4	4	1		43
38. Red Rock Reservoir	4,056	203	13	8	29	3			7				28
39. Montgomery Co.	65	114	2	6	23	1					2		5
Subtotal	4,623	483	55	18	107	6	1	0	12	4	3	0	76
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>144,163</b>	<b>7,226</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>2,460</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2,213</b>
	Am	Bl	Tu	Pe	Wh	Br	Ca	Wi	Go	Ea	Am	No	Ce
	Cr	Ca	Ti	Br	Br	Cr	Wr	Wr	Cr	Bl	Fl	Mo	Wa
		Ch		Nu	Nu				Ki				

Table 2f. Christmas Bird Count Data, 1995-96.

Location	No Sh	Lo Sh	Sh Sp	Eu St	Ye Ru Wa	No Ca	Ea To	Am Tr Sp	So Sp	Sw Sp	Wh Th Sp	Wh Cr Sp	Ha Sp	Da Ey Ju	La Lo
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>															
1. Yellow River Forest				273	3	94		275	5					432	
2. Dubuque				1,513			149	1	981		5	1	2	322	
3. Clinton				1,618			274		623	38	3	6		538	
4. Princeton	1	1		1,060			155		409	35	30	9	7	263	2
5. Davenport				3,279			496		234	49	4	36	1	612	1
6. Buffalo			1	716			145		249	31	5	13	1	267	
7. Muscatine			1	3,176	3		391		760	27	4	18	1	497	
8. Oakville				652			174		971	54	4	4	1	346	10
9. Burlington				742			157		321	9	6	39		315	6
10. Keokuk	1			1,104	7		153	1	182	55	14	4	31	336	14
Subtotal	2	1	2	14,133	13	2,188	2	5,005	303	75	130	44	3	3,928	33
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>															
11. Sioux City	2			2,706			36		307	2		2	6	646	
12. Omaha, NE	1			2,218			135		431	1			6	354	
13. Glenwood			1	1,132			108		140	12			2	235	
14. Shenandoah		5		969			81	4	272	12		1	12	109	2
Subtotal	3	6	0	7,025	0	360	4	1,150	27	0	3	2	30	1,344	2
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>															
15. Decorah	3			553	6	150		102	3		2			506	
16. Bremer County	2			166			24		365	1				216	15
17. Mason City	1			348			38		243					346	
18. Spirit Lake			1	514			13		185					119	851
19. Cherokee	3			657			23		163				2	221	
20. Westfield	4			196			3		94	1				31	
Subtotal	13	0	1	2,434	6	251	0	1,152	5	0	2	0	2	1,439	866
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>															
21. Lost Nation		1		726			103		402	14		2		285	
22. North Linn	2			500			115		366	5	2	4		242	1
23. Iowa City	1			1,248	1	193			700	28	13	28	9	605	
24. Amana			1	50			28		325	2	4		2	75	
25. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	2			535			65		191	13		7		225	51
26. Marshalltown				304			62		56					191	
27. Eldora-Union	1			699			54		206					162	
28. Ames	3			2,862	1	213			402	26		3	11	619	
29. Boone County	2		1	1,819			468	1	553	144	12	1	2	986	
30. Saylorville	4	3		2,618	1	366			1,465	158	41	11	11	686	202
31. Des Moines				2,800			127		229	30	1		1	374	
32. Fort Dodge				148			19		15					44	
33. Jamaica	4	2		748			87		370	11	5			362	
34. Sac County				493			22							39	
35. Ida County				427			15		106					106	
Subtotal	19	6	2	15,977	3	1,937	1	5,386	431	78	54	27	28	5,001	254
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>															
36. Van Buren County				82			10		22					40	
37. Rathbun		1		868	4	99			567	6	1		5	291	
38. Red Rock Reservoir	2	2		616	1	155			605	17	4		6	226	
39. Montgomery Co.			1	363										337	
Subtotal	2	3	1	1,929	5	264	0	1,194	23	5	0	11	1	894	0
<b>TOTAL</b>															
	39	16	6	41,498	27	5,000	7	13,887	789	158	189	84	64	12,606	1,155
	No Sh	Lo Sh	Sh Sp	Eu St	Ye Ru Wa	No Ca	Ea To	Am Tr Sp	So Sp	Sw Sp	Wh Th Sp	Wh Cr Sp	Ha Sp	Da Ey Ju	La Lo

Table 2g. Christmas Bird Count Data, 1995-96.

Location	Sn	Pe	Me	Pu	Co	Br	Pu	Ho	Co	Pi	Am	Ho	Eu
	Bu	Wi	Sp	Bl	Gr	Co	Fi	Fi	Pe	Si	Go	Sp	Tr
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>													
1. Yellow River Forest					2		16	20		8	102	373	
2. Dubuque							46	115		19	212	537	
3. Clinton		6				95	29	170	6	37	120	1,909	
4. Princeton	6	21		30	46	2	5	81	1	9	129	1,002	
5. Davenport	2	768		2	1	8	19	333	1	76	162	2,436	
6. Buffalo	1						5	15	6	178	103	1,380	3
7. Muscatine		1				1	83	152	13	73	133	2,964	4
8. Oakville	2	540		1	8	50	23	22		5	98	713	7
9. Burlington		42			3	7	21	72		11	69	637	212
10. Keokuk		16					22	27		30	121	521	71
Subtotal	11	1,394	0	33	60	163	269	1,007	27	446	1,249	12,472	297
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>													
11. Sioux City		4	2		11	1	4	50		172	147	247	
12. Omaha, NE		2	35		88	13	6	93		33	85	588	
13. Glenwood		121			48		7	33		20	257	787	
14. Shenandoah		51	54	1	49	6	7	73		4	74	566	
Subtotal	0	178	91	1	196	20	24	249	0	229	563	2,188	0
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>													
15. Decorah	1		1	1	2		59	191	30	101	103	1,237	
16. Bremer County	20	1			12		8	11			8	340	
17. Mason City					21		50	45		3	21	556	
18. Spirit Lake	2	1		5	1	33	19	21	135	13	133	1,428	
19. Cherokee		38			1	1	1	57		13	114	963	
20. Westfield										7	28	15	
Subtotal	23	40	1	6	37	34	137	325	165	137	407	4,539	0
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>													
21. Lost Nation						2	13	26			40	503	
22. North Linn		3	1	23			17	21	8	13	68	1,499	
23. Iowa City		1				70	23	67		50	121	913	
24. Amana							6	8	30	4	25	80	
25. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	75	3					3	83		24	95	488	
26. Marshalltown	40		12		1		2	59		14	42	281	
27. Eldora-Union				2	12		9	21	2	1	49	405	
28. Ames			3		140	10	29	113	1	70	274	1,626	
29. Boone County		248	1	1	100	4	51	98	160	16	208	901	
30. Saylorville		186		1	3	1	76	3	18	37	433	810	
31. Des Moines					3		60	107		16	89	341	
32. Fort Dodge					4			1		30	3	212	
33. Jamaica		10	4			4	5	20	2	4	70	844	
34. Sac County					302		4	2		2	29	375	
35. Ida County	1	1	2		2		1	34		60	43	452	
Subtotal	116	452	23	27	567	91	299	663	221	341	1,589	9,730	0
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>													
36. Van Buren County											1	10	
37. Rathbun	1	55	1	9	7	56	18	103		3	220	626	
38. Red Rock Reservoir		12	1	2	1		14	8	14	14	116	696	
39. Montgomery Co.		406	3		25	2		23			11	192	
Subtotal	1	473	5	11	33	58	32	134	14	17	348	1,524	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>2,537</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>2,378</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>4,156</b>	<b>30,453</b>	<b>297</b>
	Sn	Pe	Me	Pu	Co	Br	Pu	Ho	Co	Pi	Am	Ho	Eu
	Bu	Wi	Sp	Bl	Gr	Co	Fi	Fi	Pe	Si	Go	Sp	Tr
		Bl				Co							Sp

Northern Shrikes staged a mini-invasion; the 39 counted is a 10-year high, versus an average of 19. Iowa CBCs usually report more Northern than Loggerhead shrikes and little overlap of the species, but the 10-year averages are close, 19 versus 14 respectively. The largest disparity was this year, 39 versus 16 and 1989-90, 20 versus 8. The best Loggerhead Shrike year in the last 10 was 1992-93, with 29 counted.

Counts of Yellow-rumped Warbler have been good the last four years, totalling 115 birds and a high of 44 in 1992-93, while the prior six years had a total of only 29.

There has been a steady, albeit gradual, decline of Northern Cardinal numbers to 5,000 this year from 8,055 in 1989-90; could this be related to the increase in House Finches, as some have suggested for the decline in House Sparrow? It has been suggested that in rural areas, where House Sparrow has less competition with House Finch than in urban areas, the House Sparrow decline has not been as marked. While Table 3 below shows a slightly greater decline of both Northern Cardinal and House Sparrow in urban areas, the difference is probably not statistically significant.

**Table 3.** Comparison of total counts of three species in selected urban and rural Iowa Christmas Bird Counts for the periods 1989-92 and 1993-96.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Count type</u>	<u>1989-92 (a)</u>	<u>1993-96 (b)</u>	<u>b/a</u>
House Finch	Urban <sup>1</sup>	425	1751	4.12
	Rural <sup>2</sup>	29	532	18.34
House Sparrow	Urban	36,371	16,635	0.46
	Rural	18,615	9,850	0.53
Northern Cardinal	Urban	4,110	3,583	0.87
	Rural	2,156	1,933	0.90

<sup>1</sup> Urban CBCs: Davenport, Ames, Iowa City, Shenandoah (all include significant urban areas with high feeder participation)

<sup>2</sup> Rural CBCs: Clinton, Bremer County, Boone County, Jamaica (include low feeder participation and relatively low urban area)

In general the sparrow species were very near 10-year averages, with the exception of Harris' Sparrow, which has been at a low ebb recently. The total for the last three years is 229, which is not much above the 10-year average of 189.

Icterids generally departed, with no roosts or large flocks remaining, and all species were below their 10-year averages. Most numerous were Red-winged Blackbirds, but with only 2,537, they were near a 10-year low.

House Finch numbers appear to have levelled off at 2,000-3,000. Purple Finches were a little above their 10-year average. Only one crossbill, a Red, and only two Evening Grosbeaks were counted, continuing the general absence of these species. Common Redpolls however, put in a good showing. The 427 reported this year is second only to the 453 in 1989-90 for the highest count in the last 10 years. These

two years accounted for most of the total 1,244 recorded in the last 10 years. There was a good but not spectacular Pine Siskin count, and American Goldfinches were found in average numbers.

House Sparrow has been discussed above, but a truly remarkable increase continues for Eurasian Tree Sparrow, with 297 this year, well over half the total in the last 10 years. Since recording 15-20 per year during the period 1989-90 through 1992-93, its numbers since have been 68, 92, and 297. The species was reported north in the Mississippi River valley to Buffalo, but most, 212, were at Burlington.

## UNCOMMON SPECIES

This was a fair year for uncommon species (Table 4). Except for Trumpeter Swan, no new species were added to the all-time Iowa CBC list. Best of the rarities was an outstanding Barrow's Goldeneye at Keokuk, only the second ever on an Iowa CBC.

Four species were reported only the third time in the last ten years: White-winged Scoter (two at Keokuk), and three gull species, all singles at Red Rock Reservoir; Franklin's, Lesser Black-backed, and Great Black-backed. For the two black-backed species, these were also the third CBC records, while this was the fifth Franklin's Gull record.

The Bohemian Waxwing at Muscatine was only the fourth report in the last 10 years for that species. Species recorded for the fifth time in the last 10 years were Peregrine Falcon (singles at Davenport and Des Moines), Black-legged Kittiwake (one at Keokuk), Townsend's Solitaire (one at Omaha but in Iowa), Gray Catbird (singles at Burlington and Cedar Falls-Waterloo), and Evening Grosbeak (singles at Buffalo and Sioux City).

Other notable less-than-regular species were Snowy Owl, Eastern Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, and Red Crossbill.

## DELETIONS

Four species that were reported were deleted from the final list. Ospreys were reported from Davenport and Shenandoah, but neither was described well enough to eliminate other similar raptors, notably pale-headed Red-tailed Hawks. Chukar was reported from Davenport, but this species is not yet on the Official List (see discussion last year). A Mountain Bluebird at Amana and a Chipping Sparrow at Omaha were deleted as no details were provided.

Other deletions involved species which were acceptably described at other locations. These deletions were Northern Goshawk at Burlington and Townsend's Solitaire at Amana, both due to absence of details, and single Eastern Meadowlarks at North Linn and Red Rock Reservoir. While details were provided for the latter, the identifications were made based on single plumage characters, generally conceded to be unreliable (see Wilson, *Iowa Bird Life* 53:83, 1983). The Eastern Meadowlark at Shenandoah was identified by calls; a Western Meadowlark was calling in the same area. An apparent typo was the report of 30 Eurasian Tree Sparrows at Sac County; I realize the species is doing well, but not that well! Last, and probably also least, a certain unnamed compiler noted the presence in his count circle of 3 Emus, penned of course. Even though I, a New Zealander, have a certain affinity for ancient flightless birds, I cannot bring myself to accept a report of Emu, not insignificantly due to its Australian origin. I should hastily note that the compiler reporting this species had no intention of its being included in the CBC list.

**Table 4.** Species found on three or fewer Christmas Bird Counts, 1995-96. Number of individuals seen is in parentheses.

Trumpeter Swan	Sac County (3), Red Rock Res (3)
Greater White-fronted Goose	Muscatine (1), Jamaica (1)
Redhead	Davenport (1), Keokuk (4)
Ring-necked Duck	Davenport (1), Keokuk (58), Rathbun (2)
Greater Scaup	(Keokuk (14), Red Rock Res. (1)
Barrow's Goldeneye	Keokuk (1)
Oldsquaw	Keokuk (3), Cherokee (1)
White-winged Scoter	Keokuk (2)
Red-breasted Merganser	Davenport (1), Rathbun (2)
Ruddy Duck	Keokuk (5)
Golden Eagle	Shenandoah (1)
Merlin	Saylorville (4), Ida Co. (1), Rathbun (2)
Peregrine Falcon	Davenport (1), Des Moines (1)
Ruffed Grouse	Yellow River Forest (2), Decorah (2)
Franklin's Gull	Red Rock Res. (1)
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Red Rock Res. (1)
Great Black-backed Gull	Red Rock Res. (1)
Black-legged Kittiwake	Keokuk (1)
Snowy Owl	Marshalltown (1)
Townsend's Solitaire	Omaha (1)
Hermit Thrush	Decorah (1), Mason City (1)
Gray Catbird	Burlington (1), Cedar Falls-Waterloo (1)
Brown Thrasher	Davenport (1), Sioux City (1), Rathbun (1)
Bohemian Waxwing	Muscatine (1)
Field Sparrow	Burlington (1), Keokuk (7), Glenwood (1)
Fox Sparrow	Dubuque (8), Davenport (11), Keokuk (1)
Lincoln's Sparrow	Princeton (2), Keokuk (3), Shenandoah (1)
Eastern Meadowlark	Shenandoah (1)
Western Meadowlark	Shenandoah (1)
Brewer's Blackbird	Princeton (1), Glenwood (1), Rathbun (6)
Red Crossbill	Decorah. (1)
Evening Grosbeak	Buffalo (1), Sioux City (1)

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*Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653*

# FIELD REPORTS--WINTER 1995-96

W. ROSS SILCOCK

## WEATHER

This winter, some incredibly low temperatures were perhaps as much a story as the birds. Even though it was 70 in Sidney on 19 February, only 16 days earlier it was an all-time Iowa record low-tying minus 47 in Elkader. Waterloo went 139 hours below zero in early February, a record. In general, however, the winter was about average in temperature. Statewide snow cover, however, was less than average, with the only severe blizzard on 19 January. Snow cover probably affects birds more than temperature.



## PATTERNS AND TRENDS

The cold temperatures probably caused diving ducks, which don't like ice, to depart to a greater extent than last year. The peak for Canvasbacks at Montrose was only 200, compared to the low last year of about 1,000. Nevertheless, Ruddy Ducks, which are rare in winter, set both a second latest date, as well as only the second and third mid-winter records.

Some species such as Northern Harrier and Ring-billed Gull were apparently absent in midwinter which is unusual. Others such as Red-tailed Hawk, which remained quite common in northwestern Iowa throughout the period, survived statewide quite well. One observer made the interesting discovery that of 31 Belted Kingfishers seen during the period, only one was a female.

Highlights were the appearance of two or three Great Gray Owls, an unprecedented influx of Hoary Redpolls, and notable numbers of Northern Shrikes, White-winged Crossbills, and Common Redpolls. The amazing increase in numbers of Eurasian Tree Sparrows in the southeast is also noted.

## UNUSUAL SPECIES

It was not a great year for rarities, but there were several notable exceptions. Foremost was Great Gray Owl, but other rarities included Barrow's Goldeneye, Iceland Gull, a December Rose-breasted Grosbeak, a February Le Conte's Sparrow, and about 12 Hoary Redpolls. There were only about 10 previous records for Hoary Redpoll.

## SPECIES DATA

Note: a few observations noted below from 1994-95 submitted by David Dankert and misplaced by me are indicated by date. \* = documented; m.ob. = many observers; CBC = Christmas Bird Count, [ ] = record dates

**Common Loon:** The only report was of 1 at Red Rock Res. 1 Dec (SJD).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** As many as 4 wintered at Cedar L., Cedar Rapids (DLD), while the latest elsewhere was 1 at Davenport 25 Dec (PCP).

**Eared Grebe:** Last was 1 at Riverton W.A. 8 Dec (SJD). No others were reported.

- American White Pelican:** Only the 4th midwinter record was 1 below Red Rock Dam 13 Jan, seen from a canoe (SJD, JSi). An injured bird was at Fort Madison 3 Jan (SJD, JJD). It seems that this species will winter if able to escape eagles and coyotes. Latest elsewhere were 6-16 Dec at the Midwest Power ponds, Pottawattamie Co., (SJD, BKP, LJP), 18 Dec at Lock and Dam 19 (SJD), and 1 Jan in Johnston (SJD).
- Double-crested Cormorant:** Still unusual in midwinter, 1 was at Bettendorf 5 Jan (JLF). Latest otherwise was an imm. at Keokuk 18 Dec (SJD).
- Great Blue Heron:** An amazing midwinter count was 16 along the Des Moines R. below Red Rock dam 13 Jan (SJD, JSi). Far to the northwest for the date were 2 at Snyder Bend 1 Feb (SJD) and another at Brown's L. the same day (SJD). The peak count was 5 at Davenport on 14 Jan (PCP).
- Tundra Swan:** The only report was belated; 1 was shot from 2 at Snyder Bend 5 Nov (Dawn Chapman fide SJD).
- Trumpeter Swan:** The pair which wintered at Black Hawk L. last year returned with an imm. (PE, RTh); the adults were from Vilas Co., Wisconsin. Another group of 3 unmarked birds, including an imm., was at Red Rock Res. 16 Dec (SJD).
- Mute Swan:** My comments last year on whether Iowa's Mute Swans are wild and countable elicited some response; it is apparent that states to the east of Iowa believe that free-flying Mute Swans of all ages are generally wild birds, unless obviously in a park-like or captive setting. Thus free-flying adult singles, one of which wintered at Des Moines (SJD) and the other seen along the Big Sioux R. in Lyon Co. 4 Feb (Marty Eby fide SJD), and two sightings of apparently the same imm., 12-15 Feb at and below Lock & Dam 15 (PCP, KMc), may have all been wild birds.
- Greater White-fronted Goose:** Last in fall was an injured bird at the Midwest Power ponds to 6 Dec (BKP, LJP, SJD). Rare in winter, 1 stayed throughout at Bays Branch W.A. (SJD, JJD), and singles were at Ottumwa 3 Jan (SJD, JJD) and in Hamilton Co. 11 Jan (SJD). Migrants were first noted at Blue L., Monona Co., 18 Feb (PE), and in numbers at Riverton W.A., with 340 on 25 Feb (SJD).
- Snow Goose:** Scattered stragglers wintered; a "snow" at Swan L., Carroll Co., has been present for at least 2 years and a "blue" has accompanied it since Mar 1995 (RTh), 12 wintered at Bays Branch W.A. (SJD), another wintered in Madison Co. (SJD), and 1 was at Ottumwa 3 Jan (SJD). Migrants were widespread by 23 Feb (SJD), with 30,000 at Riverton W.A. 25 Feb (SJD).
- Ross's Goose:** Last in fall was 1 in Ida Co. for the CBC, while the best spring migrant count was 40 at Riverton W.A. 23 Feb (SJD). No longer notable, many observers do not take the time to look amongst Snow Geese for this species.
- Canada Goose:** Almost 14,000 were reported as wintering at various locations around the state (SJD, PCP, ETh, JV), with the biggest flock 3,500 below Red Rock dam 13 Jan (SJD, JSi) and including 2,000 as far northwest as Dickinson Co. (ETh).
- Wood Duck:** As is becoming the norm, scattered birds wintered including 1 or 2 as far northwest as Rock Valley (SJD, JV). Two were northerly for midwinter at Mason City 21 Jan (SJD). No influx had been noted by the end of the period.
- Green-winged Teal:** None were detected in midwinter. Earliest in spring were 5 at Big Creek and 6 at West Des Moines on 20 Feb (SJD); 300 were at Riverton W.A. on 24 Feb (SJD).
- American Black Duck:** Regular in winter in small numbers, usually with Mallards, the best counts were 10 at Dubuque 2 Jan (SJD) and up to 10 wintering at Cedar L. (PCP, CEJ, DLD). As many as 8 were at Mason City 21 Jan (SJD), and 1 was rather far northwestward at Snyder Bend 1 Feb (SJD).
- Mallard:** The best fall count was 30,000 at Forney L. 6 Dec (SJD), and 13,000 had returned to Riverton W.A. 25 Feb (SJD). The largest wintering group was 8,000 at Snyder Bend 1 Feb (SJD); many others winter at favored locations statewide.
- Northern Pintail:** The last sizeable group was 100 at Riverton W.A. on 8 Dec (SJD). The first big group of returning birds was 6,500 in Fremont Co. 24-25 Feb (SJD). Scattered birds were noted statewide through winter, including 3 at Mason City 21 Jan (SJD) and 1 or 2 at Rock Valley (SJD, JV).
- Blue-winged Teal:** A very early migrant, a male, was at Riverton W.A. 25 Feb (SJD). No others were noted for the period, nor expected.
- Northern Shoveler:** None were thought to have wintered, very rare for Iowa, but as many as 22 were at Ottumwa as late as 3 Jan (SJD, JJD), and 1 was with Mallards at Rock Valley 1 Jan (JV). First in spring were 6 at Riverton W.A. 24 Feb (SJD).
- Gadwall:** Two midwinter reports were surprisingly from the northwest: 3 at Brown's L. on 1 Feb (SJD) and 3 or 4 wintering on Millford Creek, Dickinson Co. (LAS). Not as unusual, but noteworthy, were up to 14 wintering at Des Moines (SJD). Otherwise, the last in fall were 3 at Knoxville 3 Jan (SJD) and the first in spring were 125 at Riverton W.A. 25 Feb (SJD) and 7 in Dickinson Co. the same day (LAS). Last year, the earliest were 4 at Coralville Res. on 20 Feb 1995 (DLD).



**American Wigeon:** Rare in midwinter, 3 wintered at Rock Valley (JV, SJD), 4 wintered at Des Moines (SJD), 2 were at Cedar L. on 6 Jan (THK), and 1 was at Le Claire on 10 Feb (PCP). First in spring were at Tomahawk M. in Sac Co. 24 Feb (PE), followed by 350 at Sheldon Pond in Fremont Co. on 25 Feb (SJD).

**Canvasback:** The largest midwinter concentration was 200 at Montrose 23 Jan (SJD), and 13 were counted in midwinter on the Mississippi R. north to Scott Co. (PCP, SJD, JJD). 1 at Des Moines 28 Jan may have wintered (SJD). First in spring was 1 at Blue L. on 18 Feb (PE).

**Redhead:** 1 at Bettendorf on 12 Jan (PCP) was the last of the fall stragglers; it may have attempted to winter. No more were reported until 1 Feb, when 1 was at Snyder Bend (SJD). The high spring count was 77 at L. Manawa on 23 Feb (SJD).

**Ring-necked Duck:** Wintering singles were at Johnston and Des Moines (SJD), while other midwinter reports were of 1 at Black Hawk L. 6-20 Jan (RTh, MTh) and 2 at Snyder Bend 1 Feb (SJD). First in spring were 5 at West Des Moines on 20 Feb (SJD).

**Greater Scaup:** Even though this species is not unusual through December, conditions permitting, the only January report was 1 at Le Claire on 14 Jan (PCP). The earliest migrant was a female at Little Wall L. on 12 Feb (SJD). The latest fall group was 9 at Princeton on 24 Dec (THK).

**Lesser Scaup:** The only wintering report was of 3 at Cedar L. (DLD); the only other midwinter report was 1 at Cherokee 2 Feb (SJD). The first migrant was at Little Wall L. on 12 Feb (SJD), and the high spring count was 36 at L. Manawa 26 Feb (BKP, LJP).

**Oldsquaw:** Some 10 were reported, fewer than the 19 last year. A male and female were at Saylorville Res. 1 Dec, the female remaining until 9 Dec; the male may have reappeared at Red Rock Res. 9 Dec with another female (SJD). An imm. male was at L. Manawa 6-8 Dec (SJD, BKP, LJP). An imm. male at Cherokee for the CBC wintered (SJD). A female and 2 imm. males were at Montrose 18-23 Dec (SJD, THK, JLF). A female was at Cedar L. 6-13 Jan (THK, DLD, CED).



**Surf Scoter:** The only report was a female or imm. at Saylorville Res. 5 Dec (SJD). *Oldsquaw, Spring Lake, Cherokee Co., 2 Feb. 1996. Photo by Stephen J. Dinsmore*

**White-winged Scoter:** None were reported other than the female and imm. male at Montrose (SJD), reported on the Keokuk CBC.

**Common Goldeneye:** The latest large flock was 1,800 at Davenport on 2 Jan (SJD), while 63 were pushing the limit of ice at Blue L. on 1 Feb (SJD). Some 500 apparently wintered at Montrose (SJD).

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** Only about the 7th and 8th Iowa records and 2nd and 3rd from central or eastern Iowa were an adult male at Red Rock Res. 9 Dec (\*SJD) and an adult male photographed at Montrose during the Keokuk CBC 18 Dec (\*SJD).

**Bufflehead:** Latest in fall was a male at Montrose 3 Jan (SJD, JJD), while 1 at Pleasant Valley on 18 Feb (PCP) was the first in spring. No more than 2 were noted at any location, and none were found in midwinter.

**Hooded Merganser:** A few winter on open water. This year 1 did so at Johnston (SJD), and 2 at Des Moines 25 Jan may have done so (SJD). A good January count was 25 at Cedar L. on 6 Jan (JLF), and 29 were at Runnells on 27 Feb (AMJ). Last year, the best count of wintering birds was 9 at Cedar L. (DLD).

**Common Merganser:** The high count of probable wintering birds was 600 at Montrose on 3 Jan (SJD). In spring, the high count was 60 at L. Manawa on 24 Feb (BKP, LJP).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Late lingerers were 2 at Montrose 3 Jan (SJD, JJD). None were reported subsequently; this species is very rare in midwinter.

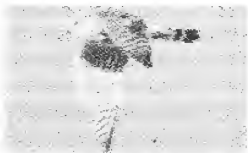
**Ruddy Duck:** The 12 at Montrose on 3 Jan (SJD, JJD) [2nd latest] were very late for a flock, while 1 still there 23 Jan (SJD) and 2 at Blue L. on 1 Feb (SJD) are only the 2nd and 3rd midwinter records. 1 at L. Anita 31 Dec (THK) was very late. Migrants appeared first at Blue L. on 18 Feb (PE).

**Bald Eagle:** Impressive counts included 170 in 10 miles of the Des Moines R. below Red Rock Res. on 13 Jan (SJD, JSi), 262 in 18 miles in the Davenport area 14 Jan (PCP), and a record count of 103 at Saylorville Res. on 1 Dec (SJD). These totals consisted of about equal numbers of adults and immatures. Adults had apparently returned to last year's nest site in Sac Co. in February (RTh, MTh).

**Northern Harrier:** None were reported between the CBCs and 18 Feb, when 1, presumably a spring migrant, was at Hawkeye W.A. (CED).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Least numerous in midwinter in northwestern Iowa, 2 were in O'Brien Co. 2 Feb (SJD), and 1 was near Westfield 29 Dec (THK).

- Northern Goshawk:** After a good CBC showing of 9 birds, 2 more appeared in midwinter: a female or imm. was in Floyd Co. 21 Jan (SJD) and an adult was at Moorehead P., Ida Co., 27 Jan ("MTh, WTh).
- Red-shouldered Hawk:** After the CBC period, 4 birds were detected: 1 in the Credit L. area 28 Dec (THK, JLF), 1 at Amana 8 Jan-10 Feb (JLF), 1 near Davenport 14 Jan (PCP), and 1 at Brenton Slough 26 Feb (AMJ).
- Red-tailed Hawk:** 2 of the Harlan's race were reported: an imm. in Clay Co. on 5 Dec (LAS) and an adult in Dickinson Co. on 7 Jan (LAS). Nesting was underway in Warren Co. with an adult carrying nesting material on 25 Feb (JSi).
- Rough-legged Hawk:** This species was widely reported throughout the period; "fairly common" in west-central Iowa (MTh), with the high count 4 or 5 at Big Marsh in Butler Co. on 3 Dec (MPr).
- Golden Eagle:** Following the lone CBC report from Shenandoah (an imm.), adults were reported from Plymouth Co. 29 Dec (THK), the 2nd consecutive year an adult has been reported in northwestern Iowa, and from the usual Allamakee Co. locations on 8 Feb (JLF) and 24 Feb (FL). One was caught in an illegally set open bait coyote trap near Lansing on 13 Jan; the trapper turned the bird in and paid a \$350 fine (Des Moines Register, 1 Mar 1996).
- American Kestrel:** In Sioux Co. kestrels were absent from mid-January until mid-February (JV); and in Dickinson Co. none were recorded until 22 Feb (ETH).
- Merlin:** In addition to 7 CBC birds, 8 more were found, east to downstream from the Red Rock dam 13 Jan (SJD, JSi). Three of the 8 birds identified to race were the prairie race *richardsonii* which has extended its wintering range eastward in recent years and appears to be the most common race in Iowa, while another at Ames on 24 Dec (SJD) was considered to be the eastern race *columbarius*.
- Peregrine Falcon:** Two were reported on CBCs, including 1 at Davenport, possibly the same bird seen in the observer's yard there 3 Feb (MLP). Last year an adult was at Cedar L. 19 Dec 1994 (DLD).
- Prairie Falcon:** Only 3 were reported: 1 near Spirit L. 31 Dec (ETH), another in O'Brien Co. 28 Jan (LAS), and possibly the same bird seen in O'Brien County 2 Feb (SJD).
- Gray Partridge:** Southeasternmost reports were of 5 e. of Albion in Marshall Co. on 9 Feb (MPr) and, last year, 11 in SE Linn Co. on 29 Jan 1995 (DLD). News from northwestern Iowa was not great; 2 near Ida Grove on 23 Feb were the first in the county for several years (PE), and they were described as "down" w. of Spirit L. (ETH).
- Chukar:** Not accepted so far on the state list as it may not be self-sustaining, a small population has persisted since about 1981 and another for 2 or 3 years at two locations at the edges of Davenport (PCP).
- Ring-necked Pheasant:** The population was considered very stable in the Sioux Co. area (JV).
- Ruffed Grouse:** None were reported other than CBC birds.
- Wild Turkey:** High midwinter counts were 61 w. of Northwood in Worth Co. on 21 Jan (SJD) and 56 n. of Harpers Ferry on 8 Feb (JLF).
- American Coot:** Wintering is rare, but 1 made it at Pleasant Hill (SJD) and 2 more did so at Cedar L. (DLD, JLF, JDa). Otherwise, none were reported between the 2 at Ottumwa on 3 Jan (SJD, JJD) and a spring returnee at Forney L. on 23 Feb (SJD).
- Sandhill Crane:** The only reports were from Fremont Co.: 1 was n. of Riverton W.A. on 17 Nov (John Bahrenfus fide SJD), and 2 were 3 miles e. of Percival in Fremont Co. on 25 Feb (SJD).
- Killdeer:** Not unexpected was the group of up to 5 at Montrose on 3 Jan (SJD, JJD), but a hardy individual set some sort of record by wintering at a spring-fed stream at the Decorah fish hatchery where temperatures reached 42 below in early February (DeC). Most did not return until 24 Feb, when 1 or 2 appeared in each of Fremont, Polk, and Sac counties (SJD, GJB, PE).
- Common Snipe:** 3 were wintering in an expected location at Montrose on 3 Jan (SJD, JJD), but 1 at South Swan L. in Carroll Co. on 3 Feb, with a 20 below temperature, was unexpected that far north (RTh). Another was in Warren Co. 4 Feb (SJD, JSi).
- American Woodcock:** About the 4th earliest ever was 1 displaying at Riverton W.A. on 24 Feb (SJD).
- Franklin's Gull:** The last fall bird was an adult in alternate plumage at Red Rock Res. on the CBC 16 Dec; it may have been the same bird seen at Saylorville Res. on 1-5 Dec (SJD). First in spring were another in mostly alternate plumage at Riverton W.A. on 24 Feb (SJD) and 1 at L. Manawa 25-26 Feb (JKo, BKP, LJP).
- Ring-billed Gull:** None were reported during the period 23 Jan-20 Feb; last in fall were 150 at Keokuk on 23 Jan (SJD), and the first reported in spring were 5 at L. Manawa on 20 Feb (BKP, LJP). The



Merlin, O'Brien County, 2 Feb 1996. Photo by Stephen J. Dinsmore

- high count was a remarkable 75,000 at Red Rock Res. 1-4 Dec, but only 2,700 were there 16 Dec (SJD).
- Herring Gull:** The latest reported was a good count of 2,000 at Davenport on 2 Jan (SJD). In spring, 3 arrived at L. Manawa 26 Feb (BKP, LJP).
- Thayer's Gull:** Becoming as regular as immatures, 2 adults in basic plumage, possibly the same bird, were reported: 1 was at Saylorville Res. 1 Dec (SJD) and the other was at Lock & Dam 14 on 2 Jan (SJD, JJD). Including CBCs, at least 5 imm. were reported. Two were at Red Rock Res. on the CBC 16 Dec, at least 1 or 2 were at Lock & Dam 14 and 15 in the period 24 Dec-22 Feb (\*THK, \*PCP, JLF, \*m.ob.), and another was at Black Hawk L. on 11 Feb (RTh, ETh).
- Iceland Gull:** The only report was an imm. at Davenport 5-7 Jan (\*JLF, \*CEd), apparently the 3rd earliest on record.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Possibly 3 birds were reported; first 1 described as 3rd basic at Red Rock Res. for the CBC on 16 Dec (\*SJD), and 1 or 2 (JLF, \*CEd) in the Davenport area 24 Dec (\*THK) through 25 Jan (JLF), described as adults.
- Glaucous Gull:** About 11 birds were reported, most on the Mississippi R. from Davenport south. Earliest were 2 imm. at Saylorville Res. 1 Dec (SJD), and none were reported after 25 Jan, when an adult was at Davenport (JLF). Adults are still unusual; besides the Davenport bird, another was at Montrose 18 Dec (SJD). None were reported north or west of Polk Co.
- Great Black-backed Gull:** 2 were found: an adult was at Red Rock Res. for the CBC on 16 Dec, and another (the same?) was in the Davenport area 30 Dec (PCP) through 8 Feb (BBI, m.ob.).
- Black-legged Kittiwake:** There were two sightings on the lower Mississippi R. A 1st basic individual was at Montrose for the Keokuk CBC 18 Dec, and a 1st basic bird was at Bettendorf 25 Jan (JLF).
- Mourning Dove:** Unexpected in midwinter so far north, 3-6 wintered at Mason City feeders (CJF), while 8 in Carroll Co. 9 Jan were also unusual (RTh).
- Eastern Screech-Owl:** A red-phase bird was in a Dickinson Co. yard (ETh); according to DeBenedictis (Birding 9:238), only about 10% of northern birds of the race *naevius* (Iowa's birds) are red phase.
- Snowy Owl:** Other than the Marshalltown CBC bird, 3 were reported, all in far northern Iowa: 1 was at the Kiley farm in Wesley Township, Kossuth Co., from the end of December to 3 Mar (Dale Kiley fide RGo), 1 was photographed in Palo Alto Co. 9 Feb (D. Marske fide LAS), and 1 was sw. of Algona in Kossuth Co. in mid-Feb (Earl Ludwig fide Matt Kenne).
- Great Gray Owl:** Surely the species of the winter, 1 was seen by many at Big Marsh in Butler Co. from 11-26 Feb after being found by Bruce DeLong and Richard Golz (fide FM, \*m.ob.). Surprisingly it was not the only one making its way to Iowa; a bird carefully studied and described and apparently this species was at Finchford in Black Hawk Co. 10 Jan (\*MWa); it seems likely that it was the same bird which was later seen at Big Marsh, only about 15 miles distant. Another bird (definitely!) was a road kill in northern Grundy Co. 17 Feb (Kevin Williams fide JJD); the specimen is in custody. These are the 2nd and 3rd (4th?) records of Great Gray Owl for Iowa.
- Long-eared Owl:** Best counts of wintering birds were 8 at Hawkeye W.A. 13 Jan (CEd) and 6 in Boone Co. (SJD). A roost at Saylorville Res. was deserted in late Feb (AMJ).
- Short-eared Owl:** Only modest numbers were reported, possibly due to the severe midwinter temperatures and snow cover; the best count was only 3 wintering near Amana (JLF, CEd), and, except for CBC birds, the only other report was of 1 at Swan L. in Carroll Co. 22 Jan (RTh).
- Northern Saw-whet Owl:** About 11 were reported in addition to CBC birds, from Boone, Crawford, Iowa, Johnson, and Warren counties. Best count was 4 in Amana Woods 13 Jan (CEd). 1 was roosting in a Barred Owl nest box in Warren Co. (AMJ).
- Belted Kingfisher:** In about 10 miles of the Des Moines R. below Red Rock dam, 18 of 19 counted were males (SJD, JSi). Of 31 seen through the period, only 1 was a female (SJD). Most northerly was 1 at Rock Valley 27 Jan (JV).
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Uncommon in winter, especially in central Iowa, 3 wintered at an Ames feeder (D. and J. Edwards fide SJD). Also probably wintering were singles in Warren Co. 20 Jan (JSi) and at Snyder Bend 1 Feb (SJD).
- Northern Flicker:** Of 4 red-shafted birds, 1 at Hickory Grove Park, Story Co., in late January (Steve Lekwa fide JJD) was the most easterly. A good count was 16 in Warren Co. 28 Jan (JSi).
- Pileated Woodpecker:** A female at Rice L. Winnebago Co. (RGo) and 1 at Big Marsh (CEd), both on 19 Feb, were at the west edge of its range.
- Horned Lark:** Largest flock was about 350 in Fremont Co. 6 Feb (BKP, LJP).
- American Crow:** No large roosts were reported, perhaps due to the cold snap in midwinter.
- Bridled Titmouse:** A report has been submitted to the Records Committee.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch:** This was a good year for this species (see CBC). Most feeders statewide had 1 or 2, but high counts were 20 at East Lawn Cemetery in O'Brien Co. 13 Jan (JV) and 17 at Kent P. in Johnson Co. on 17 Dec (CEd).

- Carolina Wren:** Most reports were from southeastern Iowa, with the most northerly 1 at Marshalltown 20 Jan (Betty Savage fide MPr) and another in Polk Co. 24 Feb (GJB). Less fortunate were 2 at Fairfield which disappeared after a cold snap (DCP). Best count was 3 at Keokuk 3 Jan (SJD, JJD).
- Winter Wren:** Often a late fall migrant, few overwinter. The only report after CBCs was 1 in Warren Co. 1 Jan (JSi).
- Eastern Bluebird:** Few survived after 21 Jan, when 4 were seen in Warren Co. (JSi), although 5 wintered in Monona Co. (PE). Spring migrants appeared first on 23 Feb in Ida Co. (PE).
- Townsend's Solitaire:** This was an above-average year with 5 reported, all from the loess hills of southwestern Iowa. First was 1 in Pottawattamie Co. 14-21 Dec (BKP, LJP, PHA, RIA, JLF) counted on the Omaha CBC, 1 was in Monona Co. 1 Feb (SJD), and 3 were in Fremont Co. on 24 Feb (SJD).
- Hermit Thrush:** None were detected after the CBCs.
- American Robin:** Numbers were generally low this winter, with small groups of up to 6 wintering around the state (SJD, JSi); spring birds arrived in late February, the first being 20 in Lucas Co. 18 Feb (JSi).
- Varied Thrush:** The only reports were of 1 at a Larchwood feeder 18 Dec (DHa) and another at a feeder near Hills in Johnson Co. on 1 Feb (JLF).
- Gray Catbird:** The only reports were the CBC birds.
- Northern Mockingbird:** Five were reported on CBCs, all in the lower Mississippi R. valley except for 2 at Amana; there were 6 additional reports, for a good total of sightings for the period. Most unexpected were 2 near Whittemore in Kossuth Co. which spent December near a heated water bath for the first Kossuth Co. record (John Simpson, Kevin Benson fide MCK). Also rather northerly was 1 at Sioux City 1-8 Dec (Ralph Speck fide BFH). Other singles were in Muscatine Co. 2 Dec (THK), in Warren Co. 13 Jan (PHA, RIA), and near Albion, Marshall Co., 7 Feb (MPr).
- Brown Thrasher:** None were reported after the 3 CBC birds.
- Bohemian Waxwing:** The only report was a single CBC bird at Muscatine.
- Cedar Waxwing:** Rather a quiet year for this species, although several flocks were noted throughout the period in Winneshiek Co. (DeC). After CBCs, the high count was 120 in Lucas Co. 18 Feb (JSi).
- Northern Shrike:** This was an outstanding year; CBCs reported 10-year-high numbers, twice the yearly average. After CBCs, 1-3 birds were reported statewide, south to Fremont, Dallas, Polk, and Johnson counties. Best count was 3 at Big Marsh on 12 Feb (SJD, JSi). Most southerly was 1 near Riverton W.A. 6 Jan (BKP, LJP).
- Loggerhead Shrike:** Usually there is little overlap between the shrike species, and so 3 northerly reports were unexpected. Details were provided for 1 near Mitchellville in Jasper Co. on 16 Dec (MPr) and also for 1 e. of Des Moines in Polk Co. 24 Jan (SJD), but not for 1 reported from Big Marsh 12 Feb (PCP, KMc, BBI).
- Yellow-rumped Warbler:** Despite the nasty weather, several midwinter reports were received. A female was at L. Macbride 14 Jan (DLD), 1 was at Big Creek S.P. 14 Jan, eating berries and small bugs (the bugs are tough, too) (PHA, RIA), 1 was at Ahquabi S.P. 25 Jan (JSi), and 1 was in Allamakee Co. 27 Jan (\*JDa, FL). None of the observers mentioned western *auduboni*, but the Allamakee bird had a white throat, characteristic of eastern *coronata*.
- Northern Cardinal:** Noteworthy in extreme northwestern Iowa, a pair wintered in Sioux Center yards (JV) and 1 wintered at a feeder in a Dickinson Co. yard (ETH).
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** A real surprise, though not unprecedented for the state but probably for Kossuth Co., a male was at a feeder near Whittemore about 1 Dec (John Simpson fide MCK).
- Eastern Towhee:** The American Ornithologists' Union has finally decided to split the two forms of towhees found in Iowa. Observers will now need to report Eastern and Spotted (western) towhees as these are now considered separate species. Eastern Towhees generally occur only in southeastern Iowa in winter; there was only 1 report, 1 at Montrose 18 Dec (SJD).
- Spotted Towhee:** Most towhees wintering in Iowa are the Spotted Towhee; they are widely scattered as singles or small groups. Apparently there are no photographs or specimens of this species for Iowa. Most easterly was 1 in Boone Co. 30 Dec (HZ).
- American Tree Sparrow:** See CBCs; numbers were considered normal in northwestern Iowa (JV).
- Field Sparrow:** None were reported after CBCs.
- Le Conte's Sparrow:** 1 was seen 25 Feb in grass-riparian habitat at Walnut Creek N.W.R. in Jasper Co. (\*DFr, fide JJD). This is the first Iowa February report, and came with the first push of "spring" weather. This species occasionally winters in northern Missouri.
- Fox Sparrow:** Rare in midwinter, the only report of a wintering bird was of 1 in Davenport seen 25 Dec-29 Feb (BBI). Last in fall was 1 at Decorah 30 Dec (DeC), and the first in spring was 1 in Jefferson Co. 22 Feb (DCP).

- Song Sparrow:** Rare in midwinter in northern Iowa, 1 survived until 8 Jan at Decorah (DeC). Less unusual were 6 at Coralville Res. 14 Jan (DLD).
- Swamp Sparrow:** Midwinter reports from expected locations were 2 in Warren Co. 14 Jan (JSi) and 5 in Johnson Co. 14 Jan (DLD), but rather far northwest was 1 at Snyder Bend 1 Feb (SJD). Last year, a high count for midwinter of 15 was made at Coralville Res. 29 Jan 1995 (DLD).
- White-throated Sparrow:** A few winter each year, mostly in the southeast. Unexpected, however, were 2 wintering in Mason City (CJF, RGo), and another in NW Allamakee Co., where it doesn't regularly winter (DeC). 1 at a Carroll Co. feeder did not reappear after 16 Jan; maybe it just departed (EBW), and 4 at Willow Slough in Mills Co. 23 Feb may have wintered (SJD).
- White-crowned Sparrow:** Iowa is at the northern edge of the species' winter range, and so northerly reports are noteworthy. A single was in Boone Co. 30 Dec (HZ) and 3-8 were at Hawkeye W.A. 21 Jan-7 Feb (DLD). Last year 8 were at Coralville Res. 29 Jan 1995 (DLD).
- Harris's Sparrow:** Another low year in general for this species (see CBCs). The only report after CBCs was from western Iowa, the expected range, where 30 at a feeder in NW Cass Co. were up from last year's 21 (MAP).
- Dark-eyed Junco:** See CBCs. The only report of an "Oregon" type after CBCs was at Marshalltown 23 Jan (MPR).
- Lapland Longspur:** Good numbers were noted in western Iowa as far south as Fremont Co., where about 650 were estimated 6 Feb (BKP, LJP). In northwestern Iowa, flocks of 1,000 were reported from Sioux Co. 1 Jan (JV) and from Carroll, Ida, and Sac counties 6 Jan (MTh).
- Snow Bunting:** Reports were from northern and western Iowa, with most easterly reports a pure flock of 200 near Allison in Butler Co. on 1 Feb (THK) and 25 near Laurel in Marshall Co. on 25 Jan (MPR), and most southerly 2 in Fremont Co. 6 Jan (BKP, LJP). One came to a feeder in Dickinson Co. 18 Jan (ETh).
- Red-winged Blackbird:** The only large winter flocks reported were 250 in Calhoun Co. and 400 in Carroll Co. in mid-Jan (RTh). Migrants appeared by 20 Feb, and territorial males were widespread in central Iowa by 25 Feb (SJD).
- Eastern Meadowlark:** Rare in winter, observers should only identify this species by call notes or a combination of more than one plumage feature. Cheek coloration can be misleading due to yellow being obscured by buffy feather edgings on fresh feathers after molt. The only report was 1 identified by call notes on the Shenandoah CBC, although another, reported from the Red Rock Res. CBC 16 Dec was identified by cheek color alone; the report has been submitted to the Records Committee.
- Rusty Blackbird:** Wintering is uncommon, especially as far north as Ames, where 1 was reported 28 Jan (Cindy Hildebrand fide JJD), Snyder Bend where 1 was seen 1 Feb (SJD), and Winneshiek Co., where 1 at the Decorah fish hatchery 7 Feb may have been the lone CBC bird (DeC). Migrants returned 24 Feb, with 50 at Riverton W.A. (SJD) and 5 in Marshall Co. the same day (MPR).
- Brewer's Blackbird:** None were reported after CBCs.
- Common Grackle:** Northerly were 3 wintering in Sioux Center (JV) and a large winter flock of 48 at Montour in Tama Co., 15 Jan (MPR). Usually only singles winter north of the expected range, most often at feeders.
- Brown-headed Cowbird:** Very rare in midwinter in northern Iowa, 2 were at a Montour feeder 23 Jan (MPR) for the only post-CBC report. None had returned by period's end.
- Purple Finch:** Good numbers appeared this winter during and after CBCs, although the best midwinter counts were in northern Iowa: 20 were wintering in Mason City at Lime Creek Nature Center feeders (CJF) and 15 were at a feeder on Gull Point, Dickinson Co., 24 Dec (ETh).
- House Finch:** CBC data indicate numbers are levelling off; the species is now firmly established in the Sioux Co. area (JV), although only 1 was seen all winter in Dickinson Co. (ETh).
- Red Crossbill:** Only 2 were reported, 1 on the Decorah CBC and another at Davenport 18 Jan (BBI).
- White-winged Crossbill:** This was a good year for this species. Although none were reported on CBCs, there were several reports from northwestern Iowa, as well as two reports elsewhere: 1 was in Davenport 1 Feb (BBI), and 4 were at Glendale Cemetery, Des Moines, 4 Feb (SJD). In the northwest, 7 were at the Holstein cemetery, Ida Co., 2 Dec (PE), up to 8 were at East Lawn Cemetery in Sheldon 13 Jan-24 Feb (JV, SJD, LAS, ETh), 1-3 were at Wall Lake cemetery in Sac Co. 7 Jan-24 Feb (PE, RTh, MTh), and 1 was at a Sioux City feeder 20 Jan (Chuck Johnson fide BFH).
- Common Redpoll:** This is another species which occurred in good numbers this winter. It was widely reported statewide although mostly in the north and west, throughout the period, south to Mills (SJD) and Appanoose (SJD, JJD) counties. Best counts were 75-90 in the Luther Bottoms, Boone Co., 30 Dec-1 Jan (HZ, SJD), and 50 at the Spirit Lake fish hatchery, Dickinson Co., 23 Dec (LAS).

**Hoary Redpoll:** Along with the influx of Common Redpolls, an unprecedented 12 Hoarys were reported in the period 23 Dec-28 Feb. There are only about 10 prior records for Iowa. Most were well described, although the Records Committee will be the final arbiter. Documentations and photographs were received for 2 birds at a Warren Co. feeder in the period 3-12 Feb (\*AMJ, \*JLF, \*SJD, m.ob.); an adult male and an imm. or probable adult female were variously considered to be present, although some descriptions suggest that the latter may have been an intergrade (JSi, SJD). An adult was at a feeder in Iowa City 4 Feb (\*JLF). A "first basic"-plumaged bird was at a feeder in Ames 28 Feb (\*SJD), and another, apparently an adult, s. of Ames 3-4 Feb (\*JCE). Two apparent adults were at a feeder in Kensett 19-22 Feb (\*RGo, CJF, CuN, JW). One was reported without details at a Northwood feeder (RGo). A "probable" with unstreaked white rump was at Fort Atkinson, Winneshiek Co. 23 Feb (DeC). Two birds which were paler, less red were at Larchwood 23 Feb (DHa). Finally, an apparent adult was seen at the Spirit Lake fish hatchery 23 Dec (LAS, HWh).

**Pine Siskin:** Best counts among the numerous statewide reports were 118 banded in the observer's yard 16 Jan; only 7 of these were recaptured among 35 on 1 Mar (PCP), and 60-75 at East Lawn Cemetery in Sheldon. 13 Jan-24 Feb (JV, SJD, ETh).

**American Goldfinch:** An unusual bird at a Donnellson feeder 26 Jan had a yellow head, with the remainder of the plumage white but for a single black wing feather (RNe).

**Evening Grosbeak:** Better than recent years, but still disappointing, only 6 were reported, including 2 on CBCs at Buffalo and Sioux City. Elsewhere, 1 was n. of Iowa City 6 Dec (THK), 2 were in Iowa City 5-6 Dec (JLF), and a male was at a feeder at Oak L., near Algona, one day in early December (MCK).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** The population in extreme southeastern Iowa appears to be rapidly expanding. A new record of 297 was made on CBCs, with birds found north to Buffalo. Subsequently, as many as 50 adults were counted at a feeder in Muscatine Co. 16 Jan-13 Feb, where many had been present the previous year also (GWh).

## OBSERVERS

Pam Allen (PHA), West Des Moines; Reid Allen (RIA), West Des Moines; Brian Blevins (BBI), Davenport; Pete Brachtel (PBr), Davenport; Gordon J. Brand (GJB), Newton; Eldon J. Bryant (EJB), Fairfield; Dennis Carter (DeC), Decorah; John Daniel (JD), Cedar Rapids; David L. Dankert (DLD), Cedar Rapids; Jeff Dankert (JDa), La Crosse, WI; Bruce DeLong (BDe), Waterloo; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; Stephen J. Dinsmore (SJD), Ames; Chris Edwards (CEd), North Liberty; Jeanne C. Edwards (JCE), Ames; Peter Ernzen (PE), Ida Grove; Carolyn J. Fischer (CJF), Mason City; Denise Friedrich (DFr), Ames; Jim L. Fuller (JLF), Iowa City; Rita Goranson (RGo), Mason City; Douglas Harr (DHa), Larchwood; Bill F. Huser (BFH), South Sioux City, NE; Ann M. Johnson (AMJ), Norwalk; Matt C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; James Kovanda (JKo), Bellevue, NE; Fred Leshner (FL), La Crosse, WI; Earl Ludwig (ELu), Algona; Kelly McKay (KMc), Moline, IL; Francis Moore (FM), Waterloo; Reuben Neff (RNe), Donnellson; Curt Nelson (CuN), Mason City; Babs K. Padelford (BKP), Bellevue, NE; Loren J. Padelford (LJP), Bellevue, NE; Marietta A. Petersen (MAP), Walnut; Mary Lou Petersen (MLP), Davenport; Peter C. Petersen (PCP), Davenport; Tim Phalen (TPh), Mason City; Diane C. Porter (DCP), Fairfield; Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Liscomb; Mark Proescholdt (MPr), Liscomb; Betty Savage (BSa), Marshalltown; Jim Scheib (JSc), Iowa City; Lee A. Schoenewe (LAS), Spencer; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; Ed Thelen (ETh), Spirit Lake; Marty Thelen (MTh), Breda; Matt Thelen (MaT), Breda; Rob Thelen (RTh), Carroll; Wes Thelen (WTh), Breda; Rick Trieff (RTr), Indianola; John Van Dyk (JV), Sioux Center; Jan Walter (JW), Mason City; Martha Waterman (MWa), Finchford; Gerald White (GWh), Muscatine; Harold White (HWh), Estherville; Eva Wiedemeyer (EBW), Carroll; Hank Zaletel (HZ), Nevada; Dolly Zangger (DZa), Larchwood.

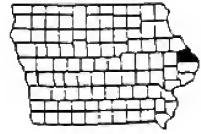
*Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653*



# UNUSUAL AMERICAN TREE SPARROW FEEDING BEHAVIOR

PETER MELDE

While trapping Wild Turkeys for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in winter 1994-95, I spent more than 30 hours a week in a blind watching a shelled-corn bait site. On 7 February 1995 at a Jackson County bait site, I observed an unusual feeding behavior by a member of a flock of American Tree Sparrows. Conditions were sunny, -6 degrees C., light wind, and 100% snow cover with a solid crust. The observations were made at a distance of two meters.



The blind was situated in a patch of evening primrose, a tall-stalked plant with long fruiting capsules containing many tiny seeds. A single bird left the flock, landing on a stalk about six inches from the end. Leaning low and forward, it began to rapidly pump its legs up and down while vibrating its slightly open wings (The posture is very similar to a fledgling begging food from a parent). The behavior lasted about ten seconds, with two brief pauses, before the bird dropped to the crusted snow and began to glean something from the surface. Then it flew to the end of another stalk and began the behavior again. This time, an intruding bird began to forage beneath the first subject. The intruder was quickly driven away, and the surface gleaned by the first bird. The alternate stalk shaking and gleaning behavior continued for about five minutes; I believe only the first bird displayed the behavior and not the intruding bird.

After this period, the behavior was modified: instead of shaking a single stalk, the bird would shake one or more stalks before gleaning the snow surface. Some of these stalks were known to have been previously shaken. A bird was also observed sticking its bill inside the seed capsule but abandoned the technique and returned to the snow surface. This period of stalk shaking continued about 15 minutes, after which the birds left the area.

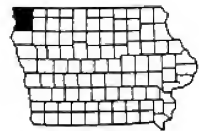
I observed from this site for eight days, but this behavior was displayed only one day. Presumably, the birds were dislodging seeds although I couldn't leave the blind to confirm this. Goldman (*Auk* 93:644, 1976) reported American Tree Sparrows exhibiting the same technique with wild bergamot. Two references to the same behavior are found in Austin (*U.S. National Museum Bulletin* 237, pp 461, 1157, 1968) which suggests that the behavior isn't as unusual as it is underreported.

1922B N. Center Street Road, Marshalltown, IA 50158

## CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPURS IN SIOUX AND LYON COUNTIES

THOMAS H. KENT

On 12 April 1995 at 10:15 a.m. in extreme northwestern Sioux County, I found the first of two male Chestnut-collared Longspurs. I found the other two miles north of Larchwood in Lyon County at 1:11 p.m. I came to northwestern Iowa to look for this species because there was fresh snow (most in Sioux and Lyon counties) and because the date was right for this species.



I was encouraged when I found a flock of 1,000 Lapland Longspurs in southwestern Sioux County. As I moved farther north, the ground became

completely snow covered except on the paved or black-topped roads, where birds of many species were flocking on the melted surface. I had been driving roads slowly since 6:50 a.m., when a Horned Lark and another bird that looked dark underneath flushed from the roadside and flew behind the car. I almost went on, but decided to check out the darker bird.

The bird was about the size of Lapland Longspurs, which were present at one point early in the observation period, and slightly larger and longer than several Vesper Sparrows that were with it. The belly was black up to the throat, but the flanks and under rump were white. The throat/chin were light yellow. There was a well-demarcated chestnut collar with a white line up to the collar. The crown was dark (black-brown) with a prominent white superciliary line. There was a black line from behind the eye to the nape and a less distinct white line below the eye. The area in front of the eye was light. The bill was medium dark and conical, about half as wide at the base as it was long. The scapulars and wing coverts were streaked due to tan feather edges on a brown background. The tail was squared with white triangular edges that were wide at the base and narrow at the tip. The center of the tail was a black V, wider at the tip. The legs appeared charcoal black. The bird fed in the grass within one foot of the road and faced into the wind. I took a number of photos with a 420 mm lens.

The second bird, also a male in breeding plumage, was feeding along the road with a flock of Lapland Longspurs less than a mile south of the Minnesota border. My description was similar to the Sioux County bird, except that I did not see the tail in flight. After a car flushed the birds, I could not relocate the Chestnut-collared Longspur.

The conditions this day were extraordinary, with all of the migrating birds flocking to the small amount of open area along paved roads. My estimates for some of the migrants in Sioux and Lyon counties between 6:50 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. were as follows: Killdeer (1,000 with 341 counted with a hand counter after 12:13 p.m.), Common Snipe (70 with 35 in one ditch), Northern Flicker (25), Horned Lark (200+), American Robin (3,000), American Tree Sparrow (2,000), Vesper Sparrow (100), Dark-eyed Junco (200+), Lapland Longspur (2,000), Red-winged Blackbird (not estimated), Western Meadowlark (100), Rusty Blackbird (100), and Brown-headed Cowbird (50).

Western Iowa is on the eastern fringe of the migration route for Chestnut-collared Longspur. Although there are a number of historical reports of this species in Iowa (Dinsmore et al. 1984), none are sufficiently documented to provide a first state record. The first acceptable record was documented by James Huntington in northwestern Muscatine County on 27 March 1982 (*IBL* 52:63, 53:35). Subsequent records have been from Johnson County on 12 March 1983 (*IBL* 53:55, 54:39), Story County on 20 March 1985 (*IBL* 55:70, 56:44), Woodbury County on 15 April 1986 (Bierman 1986), and Fremont County on 23 April 1992 (*IBL* 62:81, 63:70, *American Birds* 46:432 [photo]). The last two sightings included road-killed specimens (Iowa State University #2509, #2568). The birds in Muscatine and Johnson counties were in eastern Iowa, single, and associated with Smith's Longspurs. The birds in Woodbury and Fremont counties were in western Iowa, multiple, and associated with recent snow storms.

I was unsuccessful in locating the birds seen in Muscatine and Johnson counties in 1982 and 1983, and in 1992, when a narrow band of snow hit western Iowa, I knew it was Chestnut-collared Longspur time, but failed to act on my convictions. This year, it took no more than a small area of snow in northwestern Iowa to mobilize me



to look for the rare longspur, and I was rewarded for my effort. Although this species may occur anywhere in the state, it is undoubtedly more likely in the west. Snow storms in April not only concentrate birds along the roads, but may also push migrants farther east than usual. Chestnut-collared Longspur is a rare vagrant to eastern United States and Canada.

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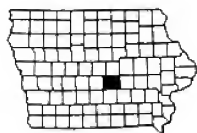
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211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

### REDDISH EGRET IN JASPER COUNTY

TIM SCHANTZ

September 5th, 1993 was a drizzly overcast day. In the late afternoon I checked the flooded fields west of Colfax along the Skunk River in Jasper County. During the past week, numerous shorebirds and waders had been seen in this area. In a small flooded area near the side of the road, I saw a small heron crouched at the edge in some sparse vegetation. As I took pictures of it from the car, it walked to the middle of the pool and started to flail around wildly, flapping its wings and shuffling its feet as it darted its bill at unseen prey. I recognized the bird as an immature Reddish Egret. Ironically, Stephen Dinsmore and I had found a bird in the same plumage on Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, just ten days before.



I noted a wader much smaller than a Great Blue Heron, with plum-colored wash to a generally gray plumage. There were cinnamon tones on the head and neck, and the underwing linings were also cinnamon colored. The eyes were pale yellow, and the bill two toned in color. Its legs appeared proportionally long for the size of its body.

After photographing the bird and noting all the details, I alerted other birders. In the fading light we were unable to find the bird that evening. The next morning I relocated the bird about a half mile to the east. The bird was last seen on 10 September 1995 and was observed by many. This is the first report of this species for Iowa.

The Reddish Egret breeds locally on both coasts of Mexico, in the southeastern United States, and the Caribbean (Howell and Webb 1995). Reddish Egrets have been known to wander along the coast of the United States as far north as New England in the East and central California in the West (DeSante and Pyle 1986). These birds are almost always found on salt water lagoons. Inland records on fresh water are extremely rare anywhere in North America. All reports of this species in the Midwest were old and judged hypothetical until the unprecedented dispersal in 1993. In 1993, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Michigan all had their first confirmed state record of this species! In contacting various state record committees, I discovered that Georgia had above normal reports, South Carolina had three, North Carolina had eight, and Delaware, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan all had one. While some

of these reports may have involved the same bird, there were undoubtedly more Reddish Egrets farther north and inland than was ever noted before.

The interesting question is why? The 1993 records all occurred from late July to mid-September and were predominantly immature birds. These dates would indicate a post-breeding dispersal that is common among waders. The United States breeding population of Reddish Egrets was estimated at about 2,000 pairs (Ehrlich et al. 1988). I could not find any recent population estimates but with the increased protection of breeding colonies, this species is most likely more common today. The Midwest flooding may have played a part in the rash of records. While the flooding could have provided more habitat for Reddish Egrets to reach the Midwest, the 1993 dispersal was noted along the East Coast prior to Midwest flooding. With the continued protection of this species and its breeding colonies, it will be interesting to see if the Reddish Egret continues to be a vagrant to the Midwest.

Thanks to Ken Brock, Philip Chu, Ricky Davis, Lynea Hinchman, David B. Johnson, Charles Keller, and Tom Kent who all provided records or helpful comments in the preparation of this note.

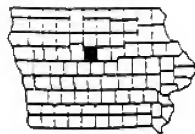
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### RED-THROATED LOON AT LITTLE WALL LAKE

MARK PROESCHOLDT

On 22 April 1995, Beth Proescholdt, Russ Widner, and I found a small loon in basic plumage at Little Wall Lake in Hamilton County. The loon was on the east side of the lake with lots of ducks. We moved closer and ended up getting very good looks at it.



The loon was light gray and white in color. It had a very thin, delicate bill, and the lower mandible was curved up slightly. The loon sometimes held the bill horizontally, but often held it upturned. It had a red eye and a thin neck which was very white on the front. The gray coloration on the back of the head was lighter in color than the dark gray back. At close range, I could see that the white area in front of the eye and the eye itself were not enclosed in the dark coloration of the head. We saw white speckling on the dark gray back. The front of the neck was white, noticeably changing to gray on the side of the neck but there was not an extremely sharp division on the neck like a Pacific Loon has. The back of its head was gray and its flanks were white colored along the water line.

The bird was floating on the surface with its head resting on its back and then swimming and diving. We watched it for approximately two hours in the afternoon and studied it through binoculars and two spotting scopes for quite some time from as close as 25 yards away. The last time we saw this loon, it popped up right beside us briefly about 20 feet away as Russ was trying to photograph it. This loon remained in the area and was seen by others on 23 and 24 April.

Little Wall Lake is a wonderful place to view migrating ducks, geese, grebes, and loons, especially in the spring. This is the first Red-throated Loon record for Little Wall Lake and Hamilton County. This is approximately the 15th state record for Red-throated Loon in Iowa and the 12th sighting since 1984. Of the 12 Red-throated Loon sightings since 1984, three were seen in April, one in May, seven in November, and one in December.

*Box 65, Liscomb, IA 50145*

## RUFF IN RINGGOLD COUNTY

JIM SINCLAIR

On 22 April 1995 at 9 a.m. Rick Trieff and I were in Ringgold County heading west on Hwy 2. Just west of Mt. Ayr, as we approached the Walnut Creek bottoms, Rick and I both noticed numerous shorebirds in flight over the bottomlands. This area appeared to have been recently flooded, and the fields were still quite damp. As our car came to a stop, I commented on the large number of Pectoral Sandpipers foraging in the soybean stubble on the north side of the road. As I surveyed the scene, a bird appeared at the near edge of the soybean field no more than 40 feet from the car. Raising my binoculars and focusing on the bird, I exclaimed to Rick that I was sure that I had never seen this shorebird before.



My first impression was of a short-tailed, chunky, almost dowdy looking shorebird which was approximately one third larger than the Pectoral Sandpipers with which it was associating. The mantle was a medium sandy-brown color with prominent pale feather edgings. The face and head were pale while the bill was dark and slightly longer than the head with a noticeable droop along the distal third. The throat was off white, and the belly and flanks were light brown with some irregular darker mottling on the flanks. As the bird moved into the bean stubble, the most prominent physical feature became evident. The legs and feet, which appeared proportionately long and sturdy, were an incandescent orange! The bird was clearly a Ruff in basic plumage.

Rick and I observed the bird under ideal viewing conditions as it foraged towards the north through the bean stubble. At approximately 150-200 feet, the bird became increasingly difficult to see, except for the legs and feet which acted as a beacon for attention. At one point I could not make out the body of the bird but could easily see the apparently disembodied legs and feet as they moved purposefully through the soybean stubble. As the bird moved farther into the field, this effect became evident through the binoculars and eventually through the scope. After ten minutes, the bird was lost from view as it and the Pectoral Sandpipers moved further from the road.

Identifying a new species is always problematical, and shorebirds can be notorious in this regard. Add to this the fact that the Ruff is unusual in several ways including more than one key identification point, and you have the potential of an identification nightmare. Most birders are aware of the spectacular and highly variable nature of the male Ruff's alternate plumage. However, the basic plumage can be almost as variable as the alternate plumage, ranging from predominantly white with dark wings through every shade of brown or gray possible. Not only is the plumage variable but the bill and legs may be dark, light, yellow, greenish, orange, or pink! Size is usually a dependable feature for identification purposes. However, the Ruff shows sexual dimorphism with the male being one fourth larger than the female. Besides the above features, the Ruff's range is a matter of question. Although formerly considered a

North American vagrant, the Ruff has been found with such consistency over the last 30 years that it is now considered regular in some East Coast states and California. There is now strong suspicion that a population breeds in the North American arctic.

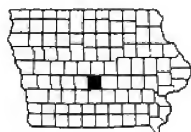
The number of Ruffs reported in Iowa has increased little over the last 20 years. The first record was a female collected in Louisa County in May 1940 (Dill, *Auk* 58:257, 1941). The 1980s saw two more records: 8-12 September 1982 in Fremont County (Silcock, *Iowa Bird Life* 53:87-90, 1983) and 1 September 1984 in Story County (Martsching, *Iowa Bird Life* 56:64, 1986). Previous to 1995, only one Ruff had been identified in Iowa in the 1990s: a female in Greene County on 26 May 1991 (*IBL* 61:92). This spring, in addition to the above bird, a female was identified in Fremont County on 31 March and 1 April (*IBL* 65:73). The Ruff, because of its many singular features and habits, is truly an exciting species and one Iowans should be prepared to find and identify.

810 North B Street, Indianola, IA 50125

## ICELAND GULL AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

On 17 November 1995, I parked at the west end of the Saylorville dam in Polk County to scan some gulls feeding along the dam face. At 11:30 a.m., I noticed a very pale gull feeding with a small flock of Ring-billed Gulls off the east end of the dam. The great distance precluded careful scrutiny, but I initially assumed this was the first-basis Glaucous Gull I had seen here the day before. A few minutes later, I was watching the bird from a distance of about 200 m and noted the all-dark bill and smaller size, both of which were wrong for Glaucous Gull. I studied and photographed the bird from distances as close as 30 m until 1:10 p.m.



The bird was with about 25 Ring-billed, ten Herring, and one Franklin's gull. The bird was about 10% smaller than a Herring Gull. The bill was black, short, and straight. The bill was shorter than the bills of all Herring Gulls present, and lacked the pale area of variable extent. The eye was dark. The head and neck were white with extensive but faint gray/brown wash, especially on the crown and back and sides of the neck. The forehead was slightly paler than the crown. The mantle was white with very fine gray/brown speckling, although the overall appearance was still very pale. The underparts were white with extensive gray/brown wash, especially on the belly and flanks. The legs were pink, although the brightness as compared to Herring Gulls was difficult to determine. While on the water, the visible portion of the primaries and the mantle were the palest. The pattern of a pale mantle, darker, mottled tertials, and pale primaries was striking when the bird rested on the water. The wingtips extended well beyond the tip of the tail when the bird was resting. The upperwing coverts were pale and mottled light brown. The upper surfaces of flight feathers were slightly paler than the upperwing coverts. In flight, the spread primaries showed a narrow pale brown fringe on the outer portion of the outer web of each feather. This was visible only at close range; otherwise, the feathers appeared entirely pale. The wingtip, i.e., the proximal 1-2 inches of the outer primaries, was completely white. The underwing coverts were pale gray/brown, contrasting with the translucent undersides of all the flight feathers. The uppertail was white with very fine brown barring, especially on the coverts and outer rectrices. There was a diffuse, pale brown

subterminal tail band, about 1-1.5 inches wide, which was the same color as the upperwing coverts and mantle. The undertail coverts were white with fine pale brown barring.

After careful study, I concluded that the bird was a first-basic Iceland Gull. The three most similar species are Herring, Thayer's, and Glaucous gulls in first-basic plumage. Glaucous Gull was eliminated by its larger size and longer, heavier, bicolored bill. First-basic Herring Gull is much darker overall with primaries darker than the upperwing coverts, a pale window on the inner primaries, and rectrices that are entirely black. First-basic Thayer's Gull is the most difficult to eliminate. Thayer's always show primaries that are as dark or darker than the rest of the wing. The dark tail band of Thayer's is always darker than the mantle and apparently matches the color of the wingtips (Kaufman 1990).

The bird was seen briefly the next morning, but could not be relocated later despite thorough searches of the lake. This represents the seventh record of an Iceland Gull in Iowa. The other records are: a first-basic from 13-16 March 1991 below the dam at Red Rock Reservoir (Kent 1992), at least three birds from 14 December 1991-13 February 1992 in the Davenport area (Kent 1992), a first-basic on 29 February 1992 at Saylorville Reservoir (Kent 1992), a first-basic from 16-30 January 1993 at Iowa City (IBL 63:49), an adult on 31 January 1993 at Lock and Dam 14, Scott County (IBL 63:49), and a first-basic on 14 February 1993 at Credit Island, Scott County (IBL 63:49). As birders continue to scrutinize gulls more carefully, records of this species in Iowa may continue to increase, especially in late fall and winter.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Kaufman, K. 1990. *Advanced Birding*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, MA. 299 pp.  
Kent, T. H. 1992. Iceland Gulls in Iowa. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:95-98.

4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014

## MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRDS IN DICKINSON COUNTY

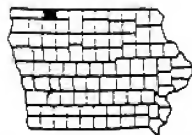
ED THELEN

On the morning of 24 March 1995 I received a telephone call at work from Iowa DNR Wildlife Technician, Maury Muhm that he had seen one or maybe two Mountain Bluebirds at the Kettleston-Hogsback Wildlife Unit. He reported that they were on the fenceline that enclosed the area where Trumpeter Swans

are to be released the next month. This area is along Highway 276 on the west side of Spirit Lake in Dickinson County about two miles north of the town of Spirit Lake.

After work I hurried to the area and, after about five minutes of scanning the fencelines with binoculars, I located two bluebirds. They were bluebirds but were they Mountain Bluebirds? With anticipation I grabbed my spotting scope and focused on the nearest bird. As the bird came into focus I found myself looking at a male Mountain Bluebird. I shifted the scope to the near fencepost and there sat another male Mountain Bluebird.

After watching them for a few minutes, I contemplated approaching them for a better look when all of a sudden they both flew. Luckily they flew toward me and



landed on the fenceline next to the road, no more than 40 feet away! Through my scope I could clearly see the uniform blue plumage on their head, breast, and back. I could also see some white coloration on their undertail coverts. Their eyes, feet, and bill were all dark. Their back, shoulders, rump, head, and tail were bright blue while their breast, throat, belly, and flank seemed a lighter blue.

Iowa DNR wildlife employees had observed them several times during the previous week, however subsequent searches by myself the next few days failed to relocate them. This is the tenth sighting of Mountain Bluebird in Iowa and the first in Dickinson County.

*RR 8725, Spirit Lake, IA 51360*

## I.O.U. BUSINESS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Tama, 17 March 1996, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.*

CAROL THOMPSON, PRESIDING, MARY KUHLMAN, SECRETARY

Present: Pam Allen, Ann Barker, Bud Gode, Ann Johnson, Matt Kenne, Mary Kuhlman, Carol Thompson, Hank Zaletel.

Treasurer Report: Pam Allen distributed the year end report. It showed excess support and revenues over expenses of \$3,745.88. There is no need to cash any CDs at this time. This report will be distributed at the spring meeting.

It was moved (Johnson, seconded by Gode) that the president assign a board member to act as a liaison to each standing committee. Passed. Thompson assigned the following board members to be liaisons: Ann Johnson-Records Committee, Ann Barker-Publications Committee, Bud Gode-Library-Historical Committee, and the treasurer-Membership Committee.

#### Committee Reports

Records: Bob Cecil is temporarily taking the place of Tim Schantz on this committee.

Membership: This committee is working on replacing two members and the chair. Thompson recommended that this committee be responsible for the new traveling display.

Publications: Ann Barker will call a meeting of this committee to elect a chair and nominate a replacement for Dave Edwards.

Library-Historical: The board discussed whether to abolish this committee, restructure it, or have a historian position. It was decided to keep the committee and have the committee members review and rewrite the bylaws. An article will be in the newsletter asking for interested people to contact the president.

Education Booklet Promotion: Hank Zaletel reported that the updates are continuing. Three new sections have been added. The target date for publication is early June or July. Zaletel will investigate the costs of publication and a decision will be made later on the number to be printed. The Publications Committee will aid in the promotion and distribution of the booklet.

Big Day: Pam Allen reported that Big Day will be promoted in the newsletter. Ideas for future Big Day competitions will be discussed at the spring meeting.

Nominations: This committee will present a slate of officers for election at the spring meeting. Secretary, treasurer and two board members will be elected.

Spring Count: The date for the spring count will be Saturday, 11 May 1996.

Field Trips: Ann Johnson reported that field trips will be held on 14 April in southwestern Iowa, 27 April at Sweet Marsh, 21 September at Snake Creek Marsh, and 16 November in northeastern Iowa.

Environmental Affairs: Carol Thompson reported that Bob Cecil (chair), Jim Dinsmore, and Beth Proescholdt have been appointed to this committee. Two items have been forwarded to them for consideration. A letter from the organization to Howard A Lipke of the Northern Tall Grass Prairie Project stating considerations to be incorporated into planning this project to provide habitat for prairie birds was read. It was moved (Johnson, seconded by Barker) to approve the letter. Passed.

#### Other Business

Partners in Flight: Carol Thompson attended the 26-27 January 1996 meeting in Kansas City. A species of concern list was established. More information will be in the newsletter.

Breeding Bird Atlas: Carol Thompson reported that a winter or early spring publication date is expected. Plans are being made to archive the data.

Birdline: Use continues to increase.

Committee structure was discussed. No changes were made.

Upcoming meetings: The spring meeting will be in Burlington on 18-20 May. The fall 1996 meeting will be 6-8 September in Mason City. The tri-state meeting will be 16-18 May 1997 in Sioux City. Financial arrangements are being finalized. Iowa City is the probable site for the Fall 1997 meeting.

Field trip liability was discussed. The president investigated this issue, and it does not seem to be a problem for the organization.

Feeder Survey: Two years of data need to be entered in a data base. The organization may need to do this ourselves or hire someone to do it. The president will look into the cost for data entry.

Ann Johnson announced that she would like short descriptions of birding areas for the Web page.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

## TREASURERS REPORT--1995, PAM ALLEN, TREASURER

### BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1995

#### CURRENT ASSETS

Cash in bank (Note 1)	\$20,705.81	
Cash in bank, (Note 2)	997.06	
Certif. of Deposit (Note 3)	24,298.93	
Certif. of Deposit (Note 4)	3,572.97	
Interest on CD (Note 5)	789.72	
Interest on CD (Note 6)	95.63	
Total Current Assets, 31 Dec. 1995		\$50,460.12
Assets as of 31 December 1994	46,714.24	
1995 addition	3,745.88	
Total liabilities, fund balance, and 1995 addition		\$50,460.12

#### FUND BALANCE BREAKDOWN

Birdathon (Note 7)	1,512.05
Book royalties	2,859.34
Endowment Fund (Note 7)	4,865.39
Project Fund (Note 7)	390.71
Endowment Fund Total	9,627.49
Life Memberships	7,402.50
Birdline Fund	311.72
Meeting Fund	1,326.11
Breeding Bird Atlas	964.24
Adopt-A-Book Fund	286.00
Operating Fund	30,542.06

Total Fund Balance, 31 December 1995	\$50,460.12
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# SUPPORT, REVENUES, AND EXPENSES 1995

## SUPPORT (Contributions and gifts)

Breeding Bird Atlas	25.00	
Adopt-A-Book Fund	286.00	
Endowment Fund	50.00	
Iowa Bird Line	125.00	
Meeting Fund	14.50	
Unspecified contributions	475.00	
Total contributions and gifts		975.50

## REVENUES

### Membership/subscriptions

Regular member	5,610.00	
First family member	1,515.00	
Second family member	403.00	
Third+ member	24.00	
Life member	150.00	
Institutional subscribers	615.00	
Total membership revenue (see note 8)		8,317.00

### Sales

I.O.U. materials	266.00	
Educational Booklets	845.00	
Iowa Bird Life back issues	79.66	
Total sales revenue		1,190.66

Interest income 1,225.84

Miscellaneous income (royalties) 6.00

**TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUES \$11,715.00**

## EXPENSES

### Publications Committee

Iowa Bird Life	4,297.17	
I.O.U. News	1,330.42	
Total Publications Committee		5,627.59

### Committee/officer expenses

Breeding Bird Atlas Expense	70.00	
Education Committee	109.00	
Iowa Bird Line	193.08	
Materials Expense	504.80	
Mtg Expense (Spr 94 & 96)	180.00	
Membership Committee	68.16	
President	32.83	
Records Committee	337.74	
Spring Bird Count Committee	64.13	
Treasurer	442.59	
Misc. (Membership directory)	339.20	

Total other organization expenses 2,341.53

**TOTAL EXPENSES \$7,969.12**

**EXCESS SUPPORT AND REVENUES OVER EXPENSES \$3,745.88**



Note 1. Norwest Bank, Cedar Falls, Iowa (checking account)

Note 2. First National Bank, Ames, Iowa (IBL Account)

Note 3. Twelve-month Certificate of Deposit, maturing 26 June 1996

Note 4. Three-month Certificate of Deposit, maturing 26 March 1996

Note 5. Interest earned on \$24,298.93 C.D. at 31 December 1995

Note 6. Interest earned on \$3,572.97 C.D. at 31 December 1995

Note 7. All Birdathon funds collected are allocated as follows: 75% to the Endowment Fund and 25% to the Project Fund; \$0.00 collected in 1995.

Note 8. Membership revenue recorded in 1995 includes dues payments for 1995 and future membership years.

## IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

### 1992, 1993, 1994, AND 1995 MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

#### MEMBERSHIP CLASS

	1992	1993	1994	1995
Regular Member	350	342	344	361
First Family Member	97	101	92	100
Second Family Member	99	100	93	101
Third+ Family Member	14	13	15	15
Free Member	10	10	10	15
Honorary Member	2	2	2	2
Institutional Subscriber	55	54	55	51
Life Member (fully paid)	39	44	42	42
Life Member (partially paid)	4	2	3	3
Total membership	670	668	656	690

## BOOK REVIEW

**The South Dakota Breeding Bird Atlas** by Richard A. Peterson. The South Dakota Ornithologists' Union, 1995. 276 pp., wirebound, \$22. Another in the growing line of breeding bird atlas books, this is smaller than that done by most other states. Much of the typical breeding bird atlas material covering procedures, physiographic regions, climate, and land cover in the state are presented in the introductory chapters. The discussion of results is somewhat cursory, and more could have been done with state information, since South Dakota contains a number of physiographic regions. Each species account covers one page and has several tables associated with it, including number of reports, dates, habitats, frequency of occurrence, and abundance estimates. The atlas maps are somewhat small, but the symbols depicting the level of breeding confirmation can be distinguished. The limited text discusses the distribution and any nests found during the atlas.

There were several aspects of this atlas that differed from that of Iowa and of many other states. Both managed areas (our priority blocks) and random blocks were designated, but the emphasis for data collection was on the latter. Land use may have influenced that decision some, since cropland, including pasture, comprises only 40% of South Dakota's landscape compared to 70% for Iowa. Random blocks in South

Dakota may have had more good habitat than that found over much of Iowa's landscape.

In this atlas, habitat was reported with regard to both land cover and habitat alteration, using pre-defined lists. This allowed grouping of species by habitat categories. Although most of the associations could have been predicted, the data provide good documentation for conservation management. This is clearly brought out in the chapter on bird conservation, which correlates habitat changes in South Dakota to trends in species populations.

In addition, abundance estimates were gathered by atlas observers for each species. An appendix discusses the transformation of these estimates into population indices, a somewhat imaginative leap when one considers the limitations of data collection methods for any atlas project.

Overall, this is a useful book for anyone interested in the distribution of species in this part of the country. I found the spiral binding convenient, since the book can be laid flat for easy use. The material in the book is somewhat technical and provides little general information about the species; it is clearly aimed at birders and ornithologists rather than at the general public.--Carol Thompson, 1116 Muscatine Avenue, Iowa City, IA 52240

## FIFTY YEARS AGO IN IOWA BIRD LIFE

The lead article of this issue discusses the distribution and status of the Northern Mockingbird in Iowa. The author, Warren Keck, concluded that the species was more widespread in Iowa than was generally assumed, a statement that would probably hold true today. His map of its distribution shows that it was mostly confined to the southeastern half of the state, except along the Missouri River where it occurred north to the Sioux City area. The report on the annual meeting that was held in Mount Vernon pointed out some differences between those meetings and current ones. Formal papers were presented both on Saturday morning and afternoon, unlike the half-day sessions we have now, and breakfast on Sunday was served at 4:15 a.m. so birders could get an early start on field trips. The attendance was a healthy 138, much larger than any recent meeting. Among the books reviewed was the first edition of Olin Sewall Pettingill's laboratory guide to ornithology. The book is now in its fifth edition and is still in print, a timeliness that is seldom found in modern-day science textbooks.--ed.



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using soy ink



The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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## EDITORIAL STAFF

James J. Dinsmore, Editor, 4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames, IA 50014 (e-mail: oldcoot@iastate.edu)  
James J. Dinsmore, Summer Field Reports Editor, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014  
Thomas H. Kent, Spring and Fall Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246  
W. Ross Silcock, Christmas Bird Count & Winter Field Reports Editor, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653

## SUBSCRIPTION/MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Institutions may subscribe to *Iowa Bird Life* for \$15 per year. Individuals may join the Iowa Ornithologists' Union according to the following membership classes: Regular (\$15); Regular as spouse or minor child of another Regular member without publications (\$4 first additional family member, \$2 each additional family member); Contributing (\$15 plus any additional tax-deductible contribution to the I.O.U.); and Life (\$300 as single payment or \$75 for each of four years). Members will also receive the quarterly *I.O.U. News* and are eligible to vote and hold office in the Union. Send subscriptions, membership payments, or address changes to Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265.

## INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other materials relating to birds and bird finding in Iowa should be sent to the editor. Accepted manuscripts will generally be published promptly, depending on space available, with the following absolute deadlines: 15 November for the Winter issue; 15 February for the Spring issue; 15 May for the Summer issue; and 15 July for the Fall issue. Most manuscripts will be refereed. All material should be typed double-spaced or hand printed in ink on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. Authors should pattern their style after a current issue of the journal. If you want more detailed guidelines or advice regarding the appropriateness of your topic for *Iowa Bird Life*, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor. Manuscripts may also be submitted on computer disk (Word 4.0 for Macintosh or compatible programs). Please submit one printed copy of the manuscript with the disk.

## OFFICERS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Carol Thompson, President (1997), 1116 Muscatine Avenue, Iowa City, IA 52240  
Ann Johnson, Vice-President (1997), 532 120th Avenue, Norwalk, IA 50211  
Mary Kuhlman, Secretary (1998), 1300 N. 29th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501  
Jim Scheib, Treasurer (1998), 10 Longview Knoll, Iowa City, IA 52240  
Other members of the Board of Directors: Ann Barker (1997), Beth Brown (1998), Dan Dorrance (1998), O. J. (Bud) Gode (1997), and Matthew C. Kenne (1997).

## STANDING COMMITTEES

**Publications:** Ann M. Barker, Dan Dorrance, Jim Durbin, David C. Edwards, Harold White.  
**Records:** Thomas H. Kent (secretary), Tanya Bray, Ray Cummins., Ann Johnson, Francis L. Moore, Tim Schantz, Ross Silcock.  
**Membership:** Beth Brown (chair), Pam Allen, Jane Clark, Laura Jackson, Curt Nelson.  
**Library/Historical:** Thomas H. Kent, Pete Petersen, James P. Sandrock, Hank Zaletel.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS OF IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

6-8 September 1996, Mason City

16-18 May 1997, Sioux City-joint with South Dakota and Nebraska

fall 1997, Iowa City

## FIELD REPORTS

Anyone observing birds in Iowa is encouraged to report their findings on a quarterly basis to the Field Reports editors. Sample reporting and documentation forms suitable for duplication are available from the editor (send self-addressed stamped envelope to Jim Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014). An article describing the reporting process is also available.

Deadlines for receipt of field reports are as follows:

\*Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb)--3 March (W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653)

\*Spring (Mar, Apr, May)--3 June (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)

\*Summer (Jun, Jul)--3 August (James J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014)

\*Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov)--3 December (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

\*Deadline for receipt of reports: 15 January. For forms and instructions write: W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653.

## IOWA BIRDLINE 319-338-9881

The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Jim Fuller checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night.

I. O. U. HOMEPAGE <http://storm.simpson.edu/~birding/>

## I.O.U. NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editors (J. Hank and Linda Zaletel, 1928 6th St., Nevada, IA 50201).

## MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The following materials may be obtained by writing the editorial office (Iowa Bird Life, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014):

\*Order form for back issues of *Iowa Bird Life*: send self-addressed stamped envelope.

\*Field Checklist of Iowa Birds--1992 Edition: 6 for \$1.00, postpaid. Also available at annual meetings.

## REPORTING NEBRASKA BIRDS

Sightings of Nebraska birds, including those within the Nebraska portion of DeSoto N.W.R., should be reported to Loren and Babs Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, NE 68005. Formats for reporting and documentation are the same as for Iowa. The Nebraska Bird Line, available 24 hours a day, is 402-292-5325. Iowa birders are encouraged to report their Nebraska sightings to this number.

## ADDRESS CHANGES

Please send address changes/corrections to Jim Scheib, 10 Longview Knoll, Iowa City, IA 52240

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